

BRITISH POETS
OF THE NINETEENTH
CENTURY

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BRITISH POETS

OF THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY

POEMS BY

WORDSWORTH, COLERIDGE, SCOTT, BYRON, SHELLEY, KEATS, LANDOR,
TENNYSON, ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING, ROBERT BROWNING,
CLOUGH, ARNOLD, ROSSETTI, MORRIS, SWINBURNE

EDITED, WITH REFERENCE LISTS AND NOTES

BY

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REVISED EDITION

οὐ πολλὰ ἀλλὰ πολὺ

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BRITISH POETS

NINETEENTH CENTURY

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PREFACE

To M. E. H.

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PREFACE

This volume makes no attempt to do what has already been so excellently done in Mr. Stedman's *Victorian Anthology*, Ward's *English Poets*, and other similar collections. It is not a new Anthology of nineteenth century poetry. Instead of giving a few "gems," or "flowers" from each one of several hundred authors, it includes only the fifteen chief poets of the century. From each one of these, however, it attempts to give a full and adequate selection, sufficient really to represent the man and his work.

The book has been planned, primarily, to give in one volume all the material which should be in the hands of the student for a College or University course on the British poets of the nineteenth century. I have therefore tried to include, first, all the poems which would be given as prescribed reading in such a course; and, second, a thorough guide to the use of a well-equipped college or public library, in connection with that reading. I hope the book may also be found useful for more general courses on English Literature, for which there is no other collection covering exactly this part of the field; and for any reader who wishes to possess in one volume the best work of the chief nineteenth century poets—"Infinite riches in a little room."

The selections are very full, and for the most part consist of complete poems. They are designed both to give all the best of each poet's work, and also (except for Mrs. Browning) to give some representation of each important period and class of his work. Long poems are usually given entire, and space has been found for Byron's *Manfred*, Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, Scott's *Marmion*, Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel*, Keats' *Hyperion*, Tennyson's *Guinevere* and *Morte d'Arthur*, Browning's *Pippa Passes*, Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*, Morris's *Atalanta's Race*, etc., etc. In general, extracts from long poems are not given, except in the case of single cantos which are complete in themselves, like the last two cantos of *Childe Harold*; or lyrics, such as the songs from Tennyson's dramas, or the Hymns to Pan and Diana in Keats' *Endymion*, which, when detached, make perfect and independent poems. An exception has been

made in the case of Byron's master-work, *Don Juan*, which of course could not be given in full, and which has been represented by long passages.

The amount of space given to an author does not necessarily correspond with his relative importance or rank as a poet. Some authors can best be represented by their shorter poems, while others—Scott, for instance, and William Morris—could not be fairly represented at all unless one of their longer poems were given. Browning and Byron could not be represented without some complete example of their poems in dramatic form, while Tennyson's drama does not hold the same relative importance in his work. Byron, in particular, cannot really be known except through his longer poems; some example must necessarily be given of the series of Oriental Romances, which, with *Childe Harold*, won him his early fame; at least one Canto of *Childe Harold* must be given complete; an example of the great Satires must be known in the *Vision of Judgment*; and finally the whole man is summed up in the different aspects of *Don Juan*. Wordsworth, on the other hand, has less space than poets of inferior rank; but he is represented by a hundred complete poems, the largest number given for any author.

The selection of shorter poems has been made generously inclusive. For Browning, more than two-thirds of the *Dramatic Lyrics*, and more than half of the *Dramatic Romances* and *Men and Women*, as well as representative poems from the other collections, are given. For Keats, the entire contents (except one poem) of the volume of 1820 is given, as well as full representation of his earlier volumes and of the posthumous poems. I have included nearly eighty poems from Landor, and hope that this—I think the first—representative selection from his verse may serve to make his work as a poet more familiarly known, in the sheer beauty of its simplicity and condensation. No apology need be made, I hope, for the extent of the Shelley selections, since his *Alastor*, *Lines Written among the Euganean Hills*, *Epipsychidion*, *The Sensitive Plant*, *Adonais*, etc., as well as the *Prometheus Unbound*, make his work take a large amount of space in proportion to the number of titles. For Rossetti, I have given more than two-thirds of the sonnets from the *House of Life*, as well as *Sister Helen*, *The Stream's Secret*, *Love's Nocturn*, *The Burden of Nineveh*, *The King's Tragedy*, and some thirty or forty of the shorter poems. I hope that the space devoted to him will be found to represent a true judgment of his great permanent value as a poet; and that the same will be true of the still larger amount of space given to the poet most different from him, Matthew Arnold.

A principal feature of the volume is the classified *Reference Lists*. I have tried to indicate, for each poet, the standard editions, other important editions, the best one-volume editions, the standard biography, the best brief biography, and all the important essays. The critical essays are usually classed in two paragraphs, and, throughout, the most important books or essays are indicated by asterisks.

The Notes have been made as few and brief as possible; and critical comment, except that of the poet himself, or, in a few cases, of other poets, has been excluded from them. They give only essential *facts* regarding the poems, or comment and explanation added by the poet himself.

The poems are arranged in chronological order under each author, according to the dates of writing when these are known, and in other cases according to the dates of publication. The dates are given after each poem, dates of writing being indicated by italic figures, and dates of publication by upright figures.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the ready generosity with which critics and teachers have given their help in making the selections. My thanks are due, in particular, to Mr. Paul E. More of the *New York Evening Post*, to Professor Stoddard of New York University, Professor Trent and Professor Odell of Columbia University, Professor Baker and Professor Sykes of Teachers' College, Professor van Dyke of Princeton, and Professor Mott of the College of the City of New York.

It can hardly be hoped that such a book as this will be entirely free from errors, especially in the reference lists and dates. Any corrections will be gratefully received. Most of the proof has been carefully read three times, but—as my friend Ronsard hath it—*Tu excuseras les fautes de l'imprimeur, car tous les yeux d'Argus n'y verraient assez clair.*

CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY,
September, 1904.

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

IN the present edition a number of typographical errors have been corrected, the text and dates of some poems have been verified by comparison with more authoritative editions than were available when the book was first published, an Index of First Lines has been added to the Author-Index and Title-Index, and the Reference Lists have been thoroughly revised and brought up to date. I am under obligation to several friends who have sent me corrections and especially suggestions for the improvement of the Reference Lists: in particular to Professor Lane Cooper, Professor Frank E. Farley, Miss Henriette E. Moore, Professor A. B. Milford, Professor Richard Jones, and Professor Charles W. Hodell; and I take this opportunity to thank the many other teachers who have written me concerning their use of the book. It is a pleasure to know that the general plan and method of the book, and of the Reference Lists, have been found helpful; and though these have been only too generously flattered by imitation, it is also a pleasure to note that no similar collection has ventured to include so much as one-third the material offered by the present volume.

C. H. P.

September, 1910.

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WORDSWORTH

LINES

Left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree, which stands near the lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate part of the shore, commanding a beautiful prospect.

Composed in part at school at Hawkshead. The tree has disappeared, and the slip of Common on which it stood, that ran parallel to the lake and lay open to it, has long been enclosed ; so that the road has lost much of its attraction. This spot was my favorite walk in the evenings during the latter part of my school-time.

(Wordsworth's note.)

NAY, Traveller ! rest. This lonely Yew-tree stands
Far from all human dwelling : what if here
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant herb ?
What if the bee love not these barren boughs ?
Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling waves,
That break against the shore, shall lull thy mind
By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.
——Who he was
That piled these stones and with the mossy sod
First covered, and here taught this aged Tree
With its dark arms to form a circling bower,
I well remember.—He was one who owned
No common soul. In youth by science nursed,
And led by nature into a wild scene
Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth
A favored Being, knowing no desire
Which genius did not hallow ; 'gainst the taint
Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and hate,
And scorn,—against all enemies prepared,

All but neglect. The world, for so it thought,
Owed him no service ; wherefore he at once
With indignation turned himself away,
And with the food of pride sustained his soul
In solitude.—Stranger ! these gloomy boughs
Had charms for him ; and here he loved to sit,
His only visitants a straggling sheep, The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper :
And on these barren rocks, with fern and heath,
And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er, Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour
A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here
An emblem of his own unfruitful life : And, lifting up his head, he then would gaze
On the more distant scene,—how lovely 'tis
Thou seest,—and he would gaze till it became
Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain
The beauty, still more beauteous ! Nor, that time,
When nature had subdued him to herself,
Would he forget those Beings to whose minds,
Warm from the labors of benevolence, The world, and human life, appeared a scene
Of kindred loveliness : then he would sigh,
Inly disturbed, to think that others felt
What he must never feel : and so, lost Man !
On visionary views would fancy feed,
Till his eye streamed with tears. In this deep vale

He died,—this seat his only monument.

If Thou be one whose heart the holy forms

Of young imagination have kept pure,
Stranger! henceforth be warned; and
know that pride,

Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,
Is littleness; that he, who feels contempt

For any living thing, hath faculties
Which he has never used; that thought
with him

Is in its infancy. The man whose eye
Is ever on himself doth look on one,
The least of Nature's works, one who
might move

The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds

Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou!
Instructed that true knowledge leads to
love;

True dignity abides with him alone
Who, in the silent hour of inward
thought,

Can still suspect, and still revere himself,

In lowliness of heart. 1787-1795. 1798.¹

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

This arose out of my observation of the affecting music of these birds hanging in this way in the London streets during the freshness and stillness of the Spring morning.—(Wordsworth.)

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,

Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years;

Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard

In the silence of morning the song of the Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment; what ails her? She sees

A mountain ascending, a vision of trees;
Bright volumes of vapor through Lothbury glide,

And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,

¹ Italic figures indicate the year of writing; upright figures the year of publication. The dates for Wordsworth are taken from the latest editions of William Knight, A. J. George, and Thomas Hutchinson.

Down which she so often has tripped
with her pail;

And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,

The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven:
but they fade,

The mist and the river, the hill and the shade:

The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,

And the colors have all passed away
from her eyes! 1797. 1800.

A NIGHT-PIECE

Composed on the road between Nether Stowey and Alfoxden, extempore. I distinctly recollect the very moment when I was struck, as described—"He looks up—the clouds are split," etc. (Wordsworth)

"Wordsworth particularly recommended to me among his Poems of Imagination, *Yew Trees*, and a description of Night. These, he says, are amongst the best for the imaginative power displayed in them." (*Diary of Henry Crabb Robinson*, May 9, 1815.)

———THE sky is overcast

With a continuous cloud of texture close,
Heavy and wan, all whitened by the Moon.

Which through that veil is indistinctly seen,

A dull, contracted circle, yielding light
So feebly spread, that not a shadow falls,
Chequering the ground—from rock,
plant, tree, or tower.

At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam
Startles the pensive traveller while he treads

His lonesome path, with unobserving eye

Bent earthward; he looks up—the clouds are split

Asunder,—and above his head he sees
The clear Moon, and the glory of the heavens.

There, in a black-blue vault she sails
along,

Followed by multitudes of stars, that, small

And sharp, and bright, along the dark abyss

Drive as she drives: how fast they wheel away,

Yet vanish not!—the wind is in the tree.
But they are silent;—still they roll along
Immeasurably distant; and the vault,

Built round by those white clouds, enormous clouds,
Still deepens its unfathomable depth,
At length the Vision closes; and the mind.
Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,
Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,
Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

1798. 1815.

WE ARE SEVEN

—A SIMPLE Child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl:
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad:
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;
—Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be?"
"How many? Seven in all," she said
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."
She answered, "Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

"Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And in the church-yard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

Then did the little Maid reply,
"Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the church-yard lie,
Beneath the church-yard tree."

"You run about, my little Maid,
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the church-yard laid,
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be
seen."
The little Maid replied,

"Twelve steps or more from my mother's
door,
And they are side by side.

"My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.

"And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was sister Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain;
And then she went away.

"So in the church-yard she was laid;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with
snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
Quick was the little Maid's reply,
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are
dead!
Their spirits are in heaven!"
'Twas throwing words away; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

1798. 1798.

SIMON LEE

THE OLD HUNTSMAN;

WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS
CONCERNED.

This old man had been huntsman to the squires of Alfoxden. . . . The fact was as mentioned in the poem; and I have, after an interval of forty-five years, the image of the old man as fresh before my eyes as if I had seen him yesterday. The expression when the hounds were out, "I dearly love their voice," was word for word from his own lips. (Wordsworth.)

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall.

An old Man dwells, a little man,—
 'Tis said he once was tall.
 Full five and thirty years he lived
 A running huntsman merry;
 And still the centre of his cheek
 Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
 And hill and valley rang with glee
 When 'Echo banded, round and round,
 The halloo of Simon Lee.
 In those proud days, he little cared
 For husbandry or tillage;
 To blither tasks did Simon rouse
 The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,
 Could leave both man and horse behind:
 And often, ere the chase was done,
 He reeled and was stone-blind.
 And still there's something in the world
 At which his heart rejoices;
 For when the chining hounds are out,
 He dearly loves their voices!

But, oh the heavy change!—bereft
 Of health, strength, friends, and kindred,
 see!

Old Simon to the world is left
 In liveried poverty.
 His Master's dead,—and no one now
 Dwells in the Hall of Ivor;
 Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead;
 He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick;
 His body, dwindled and awry,
 Rests upon ankles swollen and thick;
 His legs are thin and dry.
 One prop he has, and only one,
 His wife, an aged woman,
 Lives with him, near the waterfall,
 Upon the village Common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
 Not twenty paces from the door.
 A scrap of land they have, but they
 Are poorest of the poor.
 This scrap of land he from the heath
 Enclosed when he was stronger;
 But what to them avails the land
 Which he can till no longer?

Of, working by her Husband's side,
 Ruth does what Simon cannot do;
 For she, with scanty cause for pride,
 Is stouter of the two.
 And, though you with your utmost skill
 From labor could not wean them.

'Tis little, very little—all
 That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store
 As he to you will tell,
 For still, the more he works, the more
 Do his weak ankles swell.
 My gentle Reader, I perceive
 How patiently you've waited,
 And now I fear that you expect
 Some tale will be related.

O Reader! had you in your mind
 Such stores as silent thought can bring,
 O gentle Reader! you would find
 A tale in every thing.
 What more I have to say is short,
 And you must kindly take it:
 It is no tale; but, should you think,
 Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see
 This old Man doing all he could
 To unearth the root of an old tree,
 A stump of rotten wood.
 The mattock tottered in his hand;
 So vain was his endeavor,
 That at the root of the old tree
 He might have worked for ever.

"You're overtasked, good Simon Lee,
 Give me your tool," to him I said;
 And at the word right gladly he
 Received my proffered aid.
 I struck, and with a single blow
 The tangled root I severed,
 At which the poor old Man so long
 And vainly had endeavored.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
 And thanks and praises seemed to run
 So fast out of his heart, I thought
 They never would have done.
 —I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
 With coldness still returning;
 Alas! the gratitude of men
 Hath oftener left me mourning.

1798. 1798.

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
 While in a grove I sate reclined,
 In that sweet mood when pleasant
 thoughts
 Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran ;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green
bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure :—
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air ;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man ?
1798. 1798.

W TO MY SISTER

It is the first mild day of March :
Each minute sweeter than before
The redbreast sings from the tall larch
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

My sister ! ('tis a wish of mine)
Now that our morning meal is done,
Make haste, your morning task resign ;
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you ;—and, pray,
Put on with speed your woodland dress ;
And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living calendar :
We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth :
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than years of toiling reason :
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey :
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls :
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress ;
And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness. 1798. 1798.

A WHIRL-BLAST FROM BEHIND THE HILL

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill
Rushed o'er the wood with startling
sound ;

Then—all at once the air was still,
And showers of hailstones pattered
round.

Where leafless oaks towered high above,
I sat within an undergrove
Of tallest hollies, tall and green ;
A fairer bower was never seen.
From year to year the spacious floor
With withered leaves is covered o'er,
And all the year the bower is green.
But see ! where'er the hailstones drop
The withered leaves all skip and hop ;
There's not a breeze—no breath of air—
Yet here, and there, and everywhere
Along the floor, beneath the shade
By those embowering hollies made,
The leaves in myriads jump and spring,
As if with pipes and music rare
Some Robin Good-fellow were there,
And all those leaves, in festive glee,
Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

1798. 1800.

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

“ WHY, William, on that old gray stone
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away ?

"Where are your books?—that light be-
queathed
To Beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you!"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply:

"The eye—it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking?

"—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away."

1798. 1798.

THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME
SUBJECT

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your
looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has
spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of
things:
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives. 1798. 1798.

W.

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN
ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE
WYE DURING A TOUR. JULY 13, 1798.

No poem of mine was composed under circum-
stances more pleasant for me to remember than
this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after
crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was
entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble
of four or five days, with my sister. Not a line
of it was altered, and not any part of it written
down till I reached Bristol. It was published
almost immediately after in the little volume of
which so much has been said in these Notes.
(*Wordsworth*. The volume referred to is *The
Lyrical Ballads*, as first published at Bristol by
Cottle.)

Five years have past; five summers,
with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their moun-
tain-springs
With a soft inland murmur.¹—Once
again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and
connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose

¹ The river is not affected by the tides a few
miles above Tintern. — (*Wordsworth*, 1798.)

Here, under this dark sycamore, and
view
These plots of cottage-ground, these
orchard-tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe
fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose
themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I
see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows,
little lines
Of sportive wood run wild: these pas-
toral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of
smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the
trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might
seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless
woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his
fire
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been
to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the
din

Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the
heart;

And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration:—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, per-
haps,

As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I
trust,

To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed
mood,

In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary
weight

Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened:—that serene and blessed
mood,

In which the affections gently lead us
on,—

Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human
blood

Almost suspended, we are laid asleep

In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the
power

Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful
stir

Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my
heart—

How oft, in spirit, have I turned to
thee,

O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the
woods,

How often has my spirit turned to thee!
And now, with gleams of half-extin-
guished thought,

With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the
sense

Of present pleasure, but with pleasing
thoughts

That in this moment there is life and
food

For future years. And so I dare to
hope,

Though changed, no doubt, from what I
was when first

I came among these hills; when like a
roe

I bounded o'er the mountains, by the
sides

Of the deep rivers, and the lonely
streams,

Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads,
than one

Who sought the thing he loved. For
nature then

(The coarser pleasures of my boyish
days,

And their glad animal movements all
gone by)

To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cata-
ract

Haunted me like a passion: the tall
rock,

The mountain, and the deep and gloomy
wood,

Their colors and their forms, were then
to me

An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,

By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time
is past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other
gifts

Have followed; for such loss, I would
believe,

Abundant recompense. For I have
learned

To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-
times

The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample
power

To chasten and subdue. And I have
felt

A presence that disturbs me with the
joy

Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply inter-
fused,

Whose dwelling is the light of setting
suns,

And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of
man;

A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all
thought,

And rolls through all things. Therefore
am I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we be-
hold

From this green earth; of all the mighty
world

Of eye, and ear,—both what they half
create,

And what perceive; well pleased to
recognize

In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the
nurse,

The guide, the guardian of my heart,
and soul

Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,

If I were not thus taught, should I the
more

Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me here upon the
banks

Of this fair river; thou my dearest
Friend,

My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice
I catch

The language of my former heart, and
read

My former pleasures in the shooting
lights

Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little
while

May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I
make,

Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privi-
lege,

Through all the years of this our life, to
lead

From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil
tongues,

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish
men,

Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor
all

The dreary intercourse of daily life.
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we
behold

Is full of blessings. Therefore let the
moon

Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be
free

To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be
matured

Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies;
oh! then,

If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what heal-
ing thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, per-
chance—

If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes
these gleams

Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful
stream

We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love—oh! with far deeper
zeal

Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then for-
get,

That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty
cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were
to me
More dear, both for themselves and for
thy sake! 1798. 1798.

THE SIMPLON PASS

———BROOK and road
Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy
Pass,
And with them did we journey several
hours
At a slow step. The immeasurable
height
Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
And in the narrow rent, at every turn,
Winds thwarting winds bewildered and
forlorn,
The torrents shooting from the clear
blue sky,
The rocks that muttered close upon our
ears,
Black drizzling crags that spake by the
wayside
As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
The unfettered clouds and region of the
heavens,
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the
light—
Were all like workings of one mind, the
features
Of the same face, blossoms upon one
tree,
Characters of the great Apocalypse,
The types and symbols of Eternity,
Of first, and last, and midst, and with-
out end. 1799. 1845.

INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING
THE IMAGINATION IN BOYHOOD AND
EARLY YOUTH

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe!
Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of
thought!
And giv'st to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion! not in vain,
By day or star-light, thus from my first
dawn

Of childhood didst thou intertwine for
me
The passions that build up our human
soul;
Not with the mean and vulgar works of
Man,
But with high objects, with enduring
things,
With life and nature; purifying thus
The elements of feeling and of thought,
And sanctifying by such discipline
Both pain and fear,—until we recognize
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.
Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to
me
With stinted kindness. In November
days,
When vapors rolling down the valleys
made
A lonely scene more lonesome; among
woods
At noon; and 'mid the calm of summer
nights,
When by the margin of the trembling
lake,
Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I
went
In solitude, such intercourse was mine:
Mine was it in the fields both day and
night,
And by the waters, all the summer long.
And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and, visible for many a mile,
The cottage-windows through the twi-
light blazed,
I heeded not the summons: happy time
It was indeed for all of us; for me
It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud
The village-clock tolled six—I wheeled
about,
Proud and exulting like an untired horse
That cares not for his home.—All shod
with steel
We hissed along the polished ice, in
games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures,—the resound-
ing horn,
The pack loud-chiming, and the hunted
hare.
So through the darkness and the cold
we flew,
And not a voice was idle: with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud:
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron; while far-distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the
stars,

Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in
the west

The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumult-
uous throng,

To cut across the reflex of a star ;
Image, that, flying still before me,
gleamed

Upon the glassy plain : and oftentimes,
When we had given our bodies to the
wind,

And all the shadowy banks on either
side

Came sweeping through the darkness,
spinning still

The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth
had rolled

With visible motion her diurnal round !
Behind me did they stretch in solemn
train,

Feebler and feebler, and I stood and
watched

Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

1799. 1809.

THERE WAS A BOY

Written in Germany. This is an extract from
the poem on my own poetical education. (*Words-
worth*. The poem referred to is *The Prelude*.)

THERE was a Boy ; ye knew him well, ye
cliffs

And islands of Winander !—many a time,
At evening, when the earliest stars began
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering
lake ;

And there, with fingers interwoven, both
hands

Pressed closely palm to palm and to his
mouth

Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
That they might answer him.—And they
would shout

Across the watery vale, and shout again,
Responsive to his call,—with quivering
peals,

And long halloos, and screams, and
echoes loud

Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse
wild

Of jocund din ! And, when there came
a pause

Of silence such as baffled his best skill,
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while
he hung

Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice
Of mountain-torrents ; or the visible
scene

Would enter unawares into his mind
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven
received

Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates,
and died

In childhood, ere he was full twelve years
old.

Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale

Where he was born and bred : the church-
yard hangs

Upon a slope above the village-school ;
And through that church-yard when my
way has led

On summer-evenings, I believe, that
there

A long half-hour together I have stood
Mute—looking at the grave in which he
lies !

1798. 1800.

NUTTING

Written in Germany ; intended as part of a
poem on my own life, but struck out as not
being wanted there. . . . (*Wordsworth*).

————— It seems a day

(I speak of one from many singled out)
One of those heavenly days that cannot
die ;

When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,
I left our cottage-threshold, sallying
forth

With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders
slung,

A nutting-crook in hand ; and turned—
my steps

Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure
quaint,

Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off
weeds

Which for that service had been hus-
banded,

By exhortation of my frugal Dame—
Motley accoutrement, of power to smile
At thorns, and brakes, and brambles—
and, in truth,

More ragged than need was ! O'er
pathless rocks.

Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,

Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook
Unvisited, where not a broken bough
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign

Of devastation ; but the hazels rose
Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung,

A virgin scene !—A little while I stood,
Breathing with such suppression of the heart

As joy delights in ; and, with wise restraint

Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
The banquet ;—or beneath the trees I sate

Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played ;

A temper known to those, who, after long

And weary expectation, have been blest
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves

The violets of five seasons re-appear
And fade, unseen by any human eye ;
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
For ever ; and I saw the sparkling foam,
And—with my cheek on one of those green stones

That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,

Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep—

I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,

In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay

Tribute to ease ; and, of its joy secure,
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,

Wasting its kindness on stocks and stones

And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash

And merciless ravage : and the shady nook

Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,

Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
Their quiet being : and, unless I now
Confound my present feelings with the past ;

Ere from the mutilated bower I turned
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,

I felt a sense of pain when I beheld

The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky.—

Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades

In gentleness of heart ; with gentle hand
Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

1799. 1800.

STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I KNOWN

The next three poems were written in Germany. (*Wordsworth.*)

STRANGE fits of passion have I known :
And I will dare to tell,
But in the Lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea ;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot ;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon !
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped :
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide

Into a Lover's head !

“ O mercy ! ” to myself I cried,
“ If Lucy should be dead ! ”

1799. 1800.

SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye !
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me ! 1799. 1800.

I TRAVELLED AMONG UNKNOWN MEN

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea ;
Nor, England ! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time ; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among the mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire ;
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
The bowers where Lucy played ;
And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed. 1799. 1807.

THREE YEARS SHE GREW IN SUN AND SHOWER

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, " A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown ;
This Child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

" Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse : and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and
bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

" She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn,
Or up the mountain springs ;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

" The floating clouds their state shall
lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's
form
By silent sympathy.

" The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward
round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

" And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell ;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake.—The work was
done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run !
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene ;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be. 1799. 1800.

✓ A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;
I had no human fears :
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;
She neither hears nor sees ;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees. 1799. 1800.

A POET'S EPITAPH

ART thou a Statist in the van
Of public conflicts trained and bred ?
—First learn to love one living man ;
Then may'st thou think upon the dead

A Lawyer art thou ?—draw not nigh !
Go, carry to some fitter place
The keenness of that practised eye,
The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer?
A rosy Man, right plump to see?
Approach; yet, Doctor, not too near,
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,
A Soldier and no man of chaff?
Welcome!—but lay thy sword aside,
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? one all eyes,
Philosopher! a fingering slave,
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
O turn aside,—and take, I pray,
That he below may rest in peace,
Thy ever-dwindling soul away!

A Moralist perchance appears;
Led, Heaven knows how! to this poor
sod:
And he has neither eyes nor ears;
Himself his world, and his own God;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can
cling
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small!
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
An intellectual All-in-all!

Shut close the door; press down the
latch;
Sleep in thy intellectual crust;
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is he, with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet brown?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountains in a noon-day grove;
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart,—
The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak; both Man and Boy,
Hath been an idler in the land;
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength;
Come, weak as is a breaking wave!
Here stretch thy body at full length;
Or build thy house upon this grave.
1799. 1800.

MATTHEW

In the School of—— is a tablet, on which are inscribed in gilt letters, the Names of the several persons who have been Schoolmasters there since the foundation of the School, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to one of those names the Author wrote the following lines.

Such a Tablet as is here spoken of continued to be preserved in Hawkshead School, though the inscriptions were not brought down to our time. This and other poems connected with Matthew would not gain by a literal detail of facts. Like the Wanderer in "The Excursion," this Schoolmaster was made up of several both of his class and men of other occupations. I do not ask pardon for what there is of untruth in such verses, considered strictly as matters of fact. It is enough if, being true and consistent in spirit, they move and teach in a manner not unworthy of a Poet's calling. (*Wordsworth.*)

If Nature, for a favorite child,
In thee hath tempered so her clay,
That every hour thy heart runs wild,
Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines; and then review
This tablet, that thus humbly rears
In such diversity of hue
Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of
fame,
Cipher and syllable! thine eye
Has travelled down to Matthew's name.
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it neither checked nor stayed:
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he hath not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is silent as a standing pool;
Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were
sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness;

The tears which came to Matthew's
eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up—
He felt with spirit so profound.

—Thou soul of God's best earthly mould!
Thou happy Soul! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee?
1799. 1800.

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS

We walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and
said,
"The will of God be done!"

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering gray;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills,
We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

"Our work," said I, "was well begun,
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?"

A second time did Matthew stop;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply:

"Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

"And just above yon slope of corn
Such colors, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

"With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, to the church-yard come, stopped
short
Beside my daughter's grave.

"Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale;
And then she sang;—she would have
been
A very nightingale.

"Six feet in earth my Emma lay;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

"And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the church-yard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew,

"A basket on her head she bare;
Her brow was smooth and white:
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight!

"No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea;

"There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine;
I looked at her, and looked again:
And did not wish her mine!"

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand. 1799. 1800.

THE FOUNTAIN

A CONVERSATION

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two,

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew!" said I, "let us
match

This water's pleasant tune
With some old border-song, or catch
That suits a summer's noon;

"Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,

That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made!"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree;
And thus the dear old Man replied,
The gray-haired man of glee:

"No check, no stay, this Streamlet
fears;
How merrily it goes!
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

"And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.

"My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard,

"Thus fares it still in our decay:
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

"The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please
Are quiet when they will.

"With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free:

"But we are pressed by heavy laws;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

"If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own;
It is the man of mirth.

"My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains;
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains;

"And, Matthew, for thy children dead
I'll be a son to thee!"
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
"Alas! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side;
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide;
And through the wood we went;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

1799. 1800.

LUCY GRAY

OR, SOLITUDE

Written at Goslar in Germany. It was founded on a circumstance told me by my Sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were traced by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body however was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated and the spiritualizing of the character might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavored to throw over common life with Crabbe's matter of fact style of treating subjects of the same kind. This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from it, but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers, into whose hands these notes may fall, to a comparison that may both enlarge the circle of their sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic judgment. (*Wordsworth.*)

See also Henry Crabb Robinson's Diary, Sept. 11, 1816.

OFT I had heard of Lucy Gray:
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
—The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father! will I gladly do:
'Tis scarcely afternoon—
The minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the moon!"

At this the Father raised his hook,
And snapped a fagot band;
He plied his work;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe:
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time:
She wandered up and down;
And many a hill did Lucy climb:
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At daybreak on the hill they stood
That overlooked the moor;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward,
cried,
“In heaven we all shall meet;”
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy’s feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill’s
edge
They tracked the footmarks small;
And through the broken hawthorn
hedge,
And by the long stone-wall;

And then an open field they crossed:
The marks were still the same;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost;
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks, one by one,
Into the middle of the plank;
And further there were none!

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O’er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

1799. 1800.

W.

MICHAEL

A PASTORAL POEM

Written at Town-end, Grasmere, about the same time as “The Brothers.” The Sheepfold, on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-end, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was not in fact given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north. (*Wordsworth.*)

If from the public way you turn your
steps
Up the tumultuous brook of Greenhead
Ghyll,
You will suppose that with an upright
path
Your feet must struggle; in such bold
ascent
The pastoral mountains front you, face
to face.
But, courage! for around that boister-
ous brook
The mountains have all opened out them-
selves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen; but they
Who journey thither find themselves
alone
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones,
and kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is in truth an utter solitude;
Nor should I have made mention of this
Dell
But for one object which you might pass
by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the
brook
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn
stones!
And to that simple object appertains
A story—unenriched with strange
events,
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,
Or for the summer shade. It was the first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys,
men
Whom I already loved; not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields
and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a
Boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the
power

Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects, led me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and
think

(At random and imperfectly indeed)

On man, the heart of man, and human
life.

Therefore, although it be a history
Homely and rude, I will relate the same
For the delight of a few natural hearts ;
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the
sake

Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
Will be my second self when I am gone.

UPON the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his
name ;

An old man, stout of heart, and strong
of limb.

His bodily frame had been from youth
to age

Of an unusual strength : his mind was
keen,

Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was
prompt

And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence had he learned the meaning of all
winds,

Of blasts of every tone ; and, oftentimes,
When others heeded not, He heard the
South

Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his
flock

Bethought him, and he to himself would
say,

"The winds are now devising work for
me!"

And, truly, at all times, the storm that
drives

The traveller to shelter, summoned him
Up to the mountains : he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the
heights.

So lived he till his eightieth year was
past.

And grossly that man errs, who should
suppose

That the green valleys, and the streams
and rocks,

Were things indifferent to the Shep-
herd's thoughts.

Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had
breathed

The common air ; hills, which with vig-
orous step

He had so often climbed ; which had
impressed

So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or
fear ;

Which, like a book, preserved the mem-
ory

Of the dumb animals, whom he had
saved,

Had fed or sheltered, linking to such
acts

The certainty of honorable gain ;
Those fields, those hills—what could they
less ? had laid

Strong hold on his affections, were to
him

A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in sin-
gleness.

His Helpmate was a comely matron,
old—

Though younger than himself full twenty
years.

She was a woman of a stirring life,
Whose heart was in her house : two
wheels she had

Of antique form : this large, for spinning
wool ;

That small, for flax ; and if one wheel
had rest

It was because the other was at work.
The Pair had but one inmate in their
house,

An only Child, who had been born to
them

When Michael, telling o'er his years,
began

To deem that he was old,—in shep-
herd's phrase,

With one foot in the grave. This only
Son,

With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many
a storm,

The one of an inestimable worth,
Made all their household. I may truly

say,

That they were as a proverb in the vale
For endless industry. When day was
gone,

And from their occupations out of doors
The Son and Father were come home,
even then,

Their labor did not cease ; unless when
all

Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and
there,

Each with a mess of pottage and
skimmed milk,

Sat round the basket piled with oaten
cakes,
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet
when the meal
Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was
named)
And his old Father both betook them-
selves
To such convenient work as might em-
ploy
Their hands by the fireside; perhaps to
card
Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or
repair
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or
scythe,
Or other implement of house or field.
Down from the ceiling, by the chim-
ney's edge,
That in our ancient uncouth country
style
With huge and black projection over-
browed
Large space beneath, as duly as the light
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a
lamp;
An aged utensil, which had performed
Service beyond all others of its kind.
Early at evening did it burn—and late,
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
Which, going by from year to year, had
found,
And left, the couple neither gay perhaps
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with
hopes,
Living a life of eager industry.
And now, when Luke had reached his
eighteenth year,
There by the light of this old lamp they
sate,
Father and Son, while far into the night
The Housewife plied her own peculiar
work,
Making the cottage through the silent
hours
Murmur as with the sound of summer
flies.
This light was famous in its neighbor-
hood,
And was a public symbol of the life
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it
chanced,
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
Stood single, with large prospect, north
and south,
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-
Raise,
And westward to the village near the
lake.

And from this constant light, so regular
And so far seen, the House itself, by all
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
Both old and young, was named THE
EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length
of years,
The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must
needs
Have loved his Helpmate; but to Mi-
chael's heart
This son of his old age was yet more
dear—
Less from instinctive tenderness, the
same
Fond spirit that blindly works in the
blood of all—
Than that a child, more than all other
gifts
That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it, and forward-look-
ing thoughts,
And stirrings of inquietude, when they
By tendency of nature needs must fail.
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
His heart and his heart's joy! For
oftentimes
Old Michael, while he was a babe in
arms,
Had done him female service, not alone
For pastime and delight, as is the use
Of fathers, but with patient mind en-
forced
To acts of tenderness; and he had
rocked
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle
hand.
And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael
love,
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
To have the Young-one in his sight,
when he
Wrought in the field, or on his shep-
herd's stool
Sate with a fettered sheep before him
stretched
Under the large old oak, that near his
door
Stood single, and, from matchless depth
of shade,
Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the
sun,
Thence in our rustic dialect was called
THE CLIPPING TREE,¹ a name which yet
it bears.

¹ Clipping is the word used in the North of
England for shearing. (Wordsworth.)

There, while they two were sitting in
 the shade,
 With others round them, earnest all and
 blithe,
 Would Michael exercise his heart with
 looks
 Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
 Upon the Child, if he disturbed the
 sheep
 By catching at their legs, or with his
 shouts
 Scared them, while they lay still be-
 neath the shears.
 And when by Heaven's good grace the
 boy grew up
 A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
 Two steady roses that were five years
 old ;
 Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
 With his own hand a sapling, which he
 hooped
 With iron, making it throughout in all
 Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
 And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith
 equipt
 He as a watchman oftentimes was
 placed
 At gate or gap, to stem or turn the
 flock ;
 And, to his office prematurely called,
 There stood the urchin, as you will di-
 vine,
 Something between a hindrance and a
 help ;
 And for this cause not always, I believe,
 Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;
 Though nought was left undone which
 staff, or voice,
 Or looks, or threatening gestures, could
 perform.
 But soon as Luke, full ten years old,
 could stand
 Against the mountain blasts ; and to the
 heights,
 Not fearing toil, nor length of weary
 ways,
 He with his Father daily went, and they
 Were as companions, why should I relate
 That objects which the Shepherd loved
 before
 Were dearer now ? that from the Boy
 there came
 Feelings and emanations—things which
 were
 Light to the sun and music to the wind ;
 And that the old Man's heart seemed born
 again ?
 Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew
 up :

And now, when he had reached his eigh-
 teenth year,
 He was his comfort and his daily hope.
 While in this sort the simple house-
 hold lived
 From day to day, to Michael's ear there
 came
 Distressful tidings. Long before the
 time
 Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been
 bound
 In surety for his brother's son, a man
 Of an industrious life, and ample means ;
 But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
 Had prest upon him ; and old Michael
 now
 Was summoned to discharge the forfeit-
 ure,
 A grievous penalty, but little less
 Than half his substance. This unlooked-
 for claim,
 At the first hearing, for a moment took
 More hope out of his life than he sup-
 posed
 That any old man ever could have
 lost.
 As soon as he had armed himself with
 strength
 To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
 The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at
 once
 A portion of his patrimonial fields.
 Such was his first resolve ; he thought
 again,
 And his heart failed him. " Isabel," said
 he,
 Two evenings after he had heard the
 news,
 " I have been toiling more than seventy
 years,
 And in the open sunshine of God's love
 Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of
 ours
 Should pass into a stranger's hand, I
 think
 That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
 Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself
 Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;
 And I have lived to be a fool at last
 To my own family. An evil man
 That was, and made an evil choice, if he
 Were false to us ; and if he were not
 false,
 There are ten thousand to whom loss like
 this
 Had been no sorrow. I forgive him ;—
 but
 'Twere better to be dumb than to talk
 thus.

"When I began, my purpose was to speak

Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel; the land
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free;
He shall possess it, free as is the wind
That passes over it. We have, thou
know'st,

Another kinsman—he will be our friend
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
Thriving in trade—and Luke to him
shall go,

And with his kinsman's help and his own
thrift

He quickly will repair this loss, and then
He may return to us. If here he stay,
What can be done? Where every one is
poor,

What can be gained?"

At this the old Man paused,
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
Was busy, looking back into past times.
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to
herself,

He was a parish-boy—at the church-door
They made a gathering for him, shil-
lings, pence

And halfpennies, wherewith the neigh-
bors bought

A basket, which they filled with pedlar's
wares;

And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master
there,

Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
To go and overlook his merchandise
Beyond the seas; where he grew won-
drous rich,

And left estates and monies to the poor
And, at his birthplace, built a chapel,
floored

With marble which he sent from foreign
lands.

These thoughts, and many others of like
sort.

Passed quickly through the mind of
Isabel,

And her face brightened. The old Man
was glad.

And thus resumed:—"Well, Isabel!
this scheme

These two days, has been meat and
drink to me.

Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
—We have enough—I wish indeed that I
Were younger;—but this hope is a good
hope.

—Make ready Luke's best garments, of
the best

Buy for him more, and let us send him
forth

To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:
—If he *could* go, the boy should go to-
night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields
went forth

With a light heart. The Housewife for
five days

Was restless morn and night, and all day
long

Wrought on with her best fingers to pre-
pare

Things needful for the journey of her
son.

But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
To stop her in her work: for, when she lay
By Michael's side, she through the last
two nights

Heard him, how he was troubled in his
sleep:

And when they rose at morning she
could see

That all his hopes were gone. That day
at noon

She said to Luke, while they two by
themselves

Were sitting at the door, "Thou must
not go:

We have no other child but thee to lose,
None to remember—do not go away,
For if thou leave thy Father he will die."
The Youth made answer with a jocund
voice;

And Isabel, when she had told her fears,
Recovered heart. That evening her
best fare

Did she bring forth, and all together sat
Like happy people round a Christmas
fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her
work;

And all the ensuing week the house
appeared

As cheerful as a grove in Spring: at
length

The expected letter from their kinsman
came,

With kind assurances that he would do
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy;
To which, requests were added, that
forthwith

He might be sent to him. Ten times or
more

The letter was read over; Isabel
Went forth to show it to the neighbors
round;

Nor was there at that time on English
land

A prouder heart than Luke's. When
 Isabel
 Had to her house returned, the old Man
 said,
 "He shall depart to-morrow." To this
 word
 The Housewife answered, talking much
 of things
 Which, if at such short notice he should
 go,
 Would surely be forgotten. But at
 length
 She gave consent, and Michael was at
 ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-
 head Ghyll,
 In that deep valley, Michael had de-
 signed
 To build a Sheepfold; and, before he
 heard
 The tidings of his melancholy loss,
 For this same purpose he had gathered
 up
 A heap of stones, which by the stream-
 let's edge
 Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
 With Luke that evening thitherward he
 walked:
 And soon as they had reached the place
 he stopped,
 And thus the old Man spake to him:—
 "My Son,
 To-morrow thou wilt leave me: with
 full heart
 I look upon thee, for thou art the same
 That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
 And all thy life hast been my daily joy.
 I will relate to thee some little part
 Of our two histories; 'twill do thee good
 When thou art from me, even if I should
 touch
 On things thou canst not know of.—
 After thou
 First cam'st into the world—as oft befalls
 To new-born infants—thou didst sleep
 away
 Two days, and blessings from thy
 Father's tongue
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed
 on,
 And still I loved thee with increasing
 love.
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
 Than when I heard thee by our own fire-
 side
 First uttering, without words, a natural
 tune;
 While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy
 joy

Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month fol-
 lowed month,
 And in the open fields my life was passed
 And on the mountains; else I think that
 thou
 Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's
 knees.
 But we were playmates, Luke: among
 these hills,
 As well thou knowest, in us the old and
 young
 Have played together, nor with me didst
 thou
 Lack any pleasure which a boy can
 know."
 Luke had a manly heart; but at these
 words
 He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped
 his hand,
 And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see
 That these are things of which I need
 not speak.
 —Even to the utmost I have been to thee
 A kind and a good Father: and herein
 I but repay a gift which I myself
 Received at others' hands; for, though
 now old
 Beyond the common life of man, I still
 Remember them who loved me in my
 youth.
 Both of them sleep together: here they
 lived,
 As all their Forefathers had done; and
 when
 At length their time was come, they
 were not loth
 To give their bodies to the family mould.
 I wished that thou should'st live the life
 they lived:
 But, 'tis a long time to look back, my
 Son,
 And see so little gain from threescore
 years.
 These fields were burthened when they
 came to me;
 Till I was forty years of age, not more
 Than half of my inheritance was mine.
 I toiled and toiled; God blessed me in
 my work,
 And till these three weeks past the land
 was free.
 —It looks as if it never could endure
 Another Master. Heaven forgive me,
 Luke,
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
 That thou should'st go."
 At this the old Man paused;
 Then, pointing to the stones near which
 they stood,

Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :
 'This was a work for us ; and now, my
 Son,

It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine
 own hands.

Nay, Boy, be of good hope ;—we both
 may live

To see a better day. At eighty-four
 I still am strong and hale ;—do thou thy
 part ;

I will do mine.—I will begin again
 With many tasks that were resigned to
 thee :

Up to the heights, and in among the
 storms,

Will I without thee go again, and do
 All works which I was wont to do alone,
 Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless
 thee, Boy !

Thy heart these two weeks has been
 beating fast

With many hopes ; it should be so—yes—
 yes—

I knew that thou could'st never have a
 wish

To leave me, Luke : thou hast been
 bound to me

Only by links of love : when thou art
 gone.

What will be left to us !—But, I forget
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
 As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,
 When thou art gone away, should evil
 men

Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,
 And of this moment ; hither turn thy
 thoughts,

And God will strengthen thee : amid all
 fear

And all temptation, Luke, I pray that
 thou

May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers
 lived,

Who, being innocent, did for that cause
 Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare
 thee well—

When thou return'st, thou in this place
 wilt see

A work which is not here : a covenant
 'Twill be between us ; but, whatever fate
 Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
 And bear thy memory with me to the
 grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke
 stooped down,

And, as his Father had requested, laid
 The first stone of the Sheepfold. At the
 sight

The old Man's grief broke from him ; to
 his heart

He pressed his Son, he kissed him and
 wept ;

And to the house together they returned.
 —Hushed was that House in peace, or
 seeming peace,

Ere the night fell :—with morrow's dawn
 the Boy

Began his journey, and when he had
 reached

The public way, he put on a bold face ;
 And all the neighbors, as he passed their
 doors,

Came forth with wishes and with fare-
 well prayers,

That followed him till he was out of
 sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman
 come,

Of Luke and his well-doing : and the Boy
 Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous
 news,

Which, as the Housewife phrased it,
 were throughout

"The prettiest letters that were ever
 seen."

Both parents read them with rejoicing
 hearts.

So, many months passed on : and once
 again

The Shepherd went about his daily work
 With confident and cheerful thoughts ;
 and now

Sometimes when he could find a leisure
 hour

He to that valley took his way, and there
 Wrought at the Sheepfold. Meantime
 Luke began

To slacken in his duty ; and, at length,
 He in the dissolute city gave himself

To evil courses : ignominy and shame
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last

To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.
 There is a comfort in the strength of
 love ;

'Twill make a thing enduring, which
 else

Would overset the brain, or break the
 heart :

I have conversed with more than one
 who well

Remember the old Man, and what he was
 Years after he had heard this heavy
 news.

His bodily frame had been from youth
 to age

Of an unusual strength. Among the
 rocks

He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,

And listened to the wind; and, as before,
Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep,

And for the land, his small inheritance.
And to that hollow dell from time to time
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
The pity which was then in every heart
For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all
That many and many a day he thither
went,

And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes
was he seen

Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
The length of full seven years from
time to time,

He at the building of this Sheepfold
wrought,

And left the work unfinished when he
died.

Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her Husband: at her death the
estate

Was sold, and went into a stranger's
hand.

The Cottage which was named the EVEN-
ING STAR

Is gone—the ploughshare has been
through the ground

On which it stood; great changes have
been wrought

In all the neighborhood:—yet the oak is
left

That grew beside their door; and the
remains

Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-
head Ghyll. 1800. 1800.

THE SPARROWS' NEST

Written in the Orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.
At the end of the garden of my father's house
at Cockermouth was a high terrace that com-
manded a fine view of the river Derwent and
Cockermouth Castle. This was our favorite
play-ground. The terrace-wall, a low one, was
covered with closely-clipt privet and roses,
which gave an almost impervious shelter to
birds that built their nests there. The latter of
these stanzas alludes to one of those nests.
(*Wordsworth.*)

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,
Those bright blue eggs together laid!
On me the chance-discovered sight
Gleamed like a vision of delight.
I started—seeming to espy
The home and sheltered bed,

The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
My Father's house, in wet or dry
My sister Emmeline¹ and I

Together visited.

She looked at it and seemed to fear it;
Dreading, tho' wishing, to be near it:
Such heart was in her, being then

A little Prattler among men.

The Blessing of my later years

Was with me when a boy:

She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;

And humble cares, and delicate fears;

A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;

And love, and thought, and joy.

1801. 1807.

MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN I BEHOLD

My heart leaps up when I behold

A rainbow in the sky:

So was it when my life began;

So is it now I am a man;

So be it when I shall grow old,

Or let me die!

The Child is father of the Man;

And I could wish my days to be

Bound each to each by natural piety.

1802. 1807.

WRITTEN IN MARCH

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF BROTHER'S WATER

Extempore. This little poem was a favorite
with Joanna Baillie. (*Wordsworth*)

Compare the description of the same scene by
Wordsworth's sister: "There was the gentle
flowing of the stream, the glittering, lively lake,
green fields without a living creature to be seen
on them; behind us, a flat pasture with forty-
two cattle feeding; to our left, the road leading
to the hamlet. No smoke there, the sun shone
on the bare roofs. The people were at work
ploughing, harrowing, and sowing; . . . a dog
barking now and then, cocks crowing, birds
twittering, the snow in patches at the top of the
highest hills, yellow palms, purple and green
twigs on the birches, ashes with their glittering
spikes, stems quite bare. The hawthorn a
bright green, with black stems under the oak.
The moss of the oak glossy. We went on . . .
William finished his poem before we got to the
foot of Kirkstone." (*Dorothy Wordsworth's Jour-
nal*, April 16, 1802.)

THE Cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,

¹ Dorothy Wordsworth, called Emmeline also
in the poem *To a Butterfly*. See the beautiful
lines *To my Sister*, p. 8, the last lines of the
Sonnet p. 31, and notes on the Sonnets of 1802.

The green field sleeps in the sun ;
 The oldest and youngest
 Are at work with the strongest ;
 The cattle are grazing,
 Their heads never raising ;
 There are forty feeding like one !

Like an army defeated
 The snow hath retreated,
 And now doth fare ill
 On the top of the bare hill ;
 The ploughboy is whooping—anon—
 anon :
 There's joy in the mountains ;
 There's life in the fountains ;
 Small clouds are sailing,
 Blue sky prevailing ;
 The rain is over and gone !

1802. 1807.

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. It is remarkable that this flower, coming out so early in the spring as it does, and so bright and beautiful, and in such profusion, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse. What adds much to the interest that attends it is its habit of shutting itself up and opening out according to the degree of light and temperature of the air. (*Wordsworth.*)

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
 Let them live upon their praises ;
 Long as there's a sun that sets,
 Primroses will have their glory ;
 Long as there are violets,
 They will have a place in story :
 There's a flower that shall be mine,
 'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
 For the finding of a star ;
 Up and down the heavens they go,
 Men that keep a mighty rout !
 I'm as great as they, I trow,
 Since the day I found thee out,
 Little Flower !—I'll make a stir,
 Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf
 Bold, and lavish of thyself ;
 Since we needs must first have met
 I have seen thee, high and low,
 Thirty years or more, and yet
 'Twas a face I did not know ;
 Thou hast now, go where I may,
 Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
 In the time before the thrush

Has a thought about her nest,
 Thou wilt come with half a call,
 Spreading out thy glossy breast
 Like a careless Prodigal ;
 Telling tales about the sun,
 When we've little warmth, or none

Poets, vain men in their mood !
 Travel with the multitude :
 Never heed them ; I aver
 That they all are wanton wooers ;
 But the thrifty cottager,
 Who stirs little out of doors,
 Joys to spy thee near her home ;
 Spring is coming, Thou art come !

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
 Kindly, unassuming Spirit !
 Careless of thy neighborhood,
 Thou dost show thy pleasant face
 On the moor, and in the wood,
 In the lane ; there's not a place,
 Howsoever mean it be,
 But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,
 Children of the flaring hours !
 Buttercups, that will be seen,
 Whether we will see or no ;
 Others, too, of lofty mien ;
 They have done as worldlings do,
 Taken praise that should be thine
 Little, humble Celandine !

Prophet of delight and mirth,
 Ill-requited upon earth ;
 Herald of a mighty band,
 Of a joyous train ensuing,
 Serving at my heart's command,
 Tasks that are no tasks renewing,
 I will sing, as doth belove,
 Hymns in praise of what I love !

1802. 1807

TO THE SAME FLOWER

PLEASURES newly found are sweet
 When they lie about our feet :
 February last, my heart
 First at sight of thee was glad ;
 All unheard of as thou art,
 Thou must needs, I think, have had,
 Celandine ! and long ago,
 Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,
 Whosoe'er the man might be,
 Who the first with pointed rays
 (Workman worthy to be sainted)

Set the sign-board in a blaze,
When the rising sun he painted,
Took the fancy from a glance
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring
News of winter's vanishing,
And the children build their bowers,
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould
All about with full-blown flowers,
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold!
With the proudest thou art there,
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure
By myself a lonely pleasure,
Sighed to think I read a book
Only read, perhaps, by me;
Yet I long could overlook
Thy bright coronet and Thee,
And thy arch and wily ways,
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek;
While the patient primrose sits
Like a beggar in the cold,
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,
Slipp'st into thy sheltering hold;
Liveliest of the vernal train
When ye all are out again.

Drawn by what peculiar spell,
By what charm of sight or smell,
Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,
Laboring for her waxen cells,
Fondly settle upon Thee
Prized above all buds and bells
Opening daily at thy side,
By the season multiplied?

Thou are not beyond the moon,
But a thing "beneath our shoon:"
Let the bold Discoverer thrud
In his bark the polar sea;
Rear who will a pyramid;
Praise it is enough for me,
If there be but three or four
Who will love my little Flower.

1802. 1807.

RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

This poem was originally known as *The Leech Gatherer*, and is still often called by that title. Compare the account of its origin, in Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*:

"When William and I returned, we met an old man almost double. He had on a coat, thrown over his shoulders, above his waistcoat and coat.

Under this he carried a bundle, and had an apron on and a night-cap. His face was interesting. He had dark eyes and a long nose. John, who afterwards met him at Wytheburn, took him for a Jew. He was of Scotch parents, but had been born in the army. He had had a wife, and 'she was a good woman, and it pleased God to bless us with ten children.' All these were dead but one, of whom he had not heard for many years, a sailor. His trade was to gather leeches, but now leeches were scarce, and he had not strength for it. He lived by begging, and was making his way to Carlisle, where he should buy a few godly books to sell. He said leeches were very scarce, partly owing to this dry season, but many years they have been scarce. He supposed it owing to their being much sought after, that they did not breed fast, and were of slow growth. Leeches were formerly 2s. 6d. per 100; they are now 30s. He had been hurt in driving a cart, his leg broken, his body driven over, his skull fractured. He felt no pain till he recovered from his first insensibility. . . . It was then late in the evening, when the light was just going away." (*Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal*, October 3, 1800.)

THERE was a roaring in the wind all
night;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
But now the sun is rising calm and
bright;
The birds are singing in the distant
woods;
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove
broods;
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie
chatters;
And all the air is filled with pleasant
noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of
doors;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;
The grass is bright with rain-drops;—on
the moors
The hare is running races in her mirth;
And with her feet she from the plashy
earth
Raises a mist, that, glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she
doth run.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor,
I saw the hare that raced about with
joy;
I heard the woods and distant waters
roar;
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy:
The pleasant season did my heart em-
ploy:
My old remembrances went from me
wholly;
And all the ways of men, so vain and
melancholy.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the
might

Of joy in minds that can no further go,
As high as we have mounted in delight
In our dejection do we sink as low ;
To me that morning did it happen so ;
And fears and fancies thick upon me
came ;

Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I
knew not, nor could name.

I heard the skylark warbling in the sky ;
And I bethought me of the playful hare :
Even such a Lappy Child of earth am I ;
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare ;
Far from the world I walk, and from all
care ;

But there may come another day to me -
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and
poverty.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant
thought,

As if life's business were a summer
mood ;

As if all needful things would come un-
sought

To genial faith, still rich in genial good ;
But how can he expect that others
should

Build for him, sow for him, and at his
call

Love him, who for himself will take no
heed at all ?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous
Boy,

The sleepless Soul that perished in his
pride ;

Of him who walked in glory and in joy
Following his plough, along the moun-
tain-side :

By our own spirits are we deified :
We Poets in our youth begin in glad-

ness ;
But thereof come in the end desponden-
cy and madness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
A leading from above, a something
given,

Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,
When I with these untoward thoughts
had striven,

Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven
I saw a Man before me unawares :
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore
gray hairs.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;
Wonder to all who do the same espy,
By what means it could thither come,
and whence ;

So that it seems a thing endued with
sense :

Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a
shelf

Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun
itself ;

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor
dead,

Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age :

His body was bent double, feet and head

Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;

As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
Of sickness felt by him in times long
past,

A more than human weight upon his
frame had cast.

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and
pale face,

Upon a long gray staff of shaven wood :

And, still as I drew near with gentle
pace,

Upon the margin of that moorish flood

Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,

That heareth not the loud winds when
they call

And moveth all together, if it move at
all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the
pond

Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
Upon the muddy water, which he

conned,

As if he had been reading in a book :

And now a stranger's privilege I took ;

And, drawing to his side, to him did say,

"This morning gives us promise of a
glorious day."

A gentle answer did the old Man make,
In courteous speech which forth he

slowly drew :

And him with further words I thus be-
spoke,

"What occupation do you there pursue ?

This is a lonesome place for one like you."

Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise

Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-
vivid eyes,

His words came feebly, from a feeble
chest,

But each in solemn order followed each,

With something of a lofty utterance
 drest—
 Choice word and measured phrase,
 above the reach
 Of ordinary men; a stately speech;
 Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,
 Religious men, who give to God and
 man their dues.

He told, that to these waters he had
 come
 To gather leeches, being old and poor:
 Employment hazardous and wearisome!
 And he had many hardships to endure:
 From pond to pond he roamed, from
 moor to moor;
 Housing, with God's good help, by choice
 or chance,
 And in this way he gained an honest
 maintenance.

The old Man still stood talking by my
 side;
 But now his voice to me was like a
 stream
 Scarce heard; nor word from word
 could I divide;
 And the whole body of the Man did seem
 Like one whom I had met with in a
 dream;
 Or like a man from some far region sent,
 To give me human strength, by apt ad-
 monishment.

My former thoughts returned: the fear
 that kills;
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
 Cold, pain, and labor, and all fleshly ills;
 And mighty Poets in their misery dead.
 —Perplexed, and longing to be com-
 forted,
 My question eagerly did I renew,
 "How is it that you live, and what is it
 you do?"

He with a smile did then his words
 repeat;
 And said, that, gathering leeches, far
 and wide
 He travelled; stirring thus about his
 feet
 The waters of the pools where they
 abide.
 "Once I could meet with them on every
 side;
 But they have dwindled long by slow
 decay;
 Yet still I persevere, and find them
 where I may."

While he was talking thus, the lonely
 place,
 The old Man's shape, and speech—all
 troubled me:
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him
 pace
 About the weary moors continually,
 Wandering about alone and silently.
 While I these thoughts within myself
 pursued,
 He, having made a pause, the same dis-
 course renewed.

And soon with this he other matter
 blended,
 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanor kind,
 But stately in the main; and when he
 ended,
 I could have laughed myself to scorn, to
 find
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.
 "God," said I, "be my help and stay
 secure;
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the
 lonely moor!" 1802. 1807.

I GRIEVED FOR BUONAPARTÉ

The direct influence of Milton seems evident
 in many of the following sonnets, and is con-
 firmed by the entry in Dorothy Wordsworth's
 Journal, May 21, 1802: "William wrote two
 sonnets of Buonaparte, after I had read Milton's
 sonnets to him." See also Wordsworth's note on
 "Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room,"
 p. 48.

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain
 And an unthinking grief! The tenderest
 mood
 Of that Man's mind—what can it be?
 what food
 Fed his first hopes? what knowledge
 could he gain?
 'Tis not in battles that from youth we
 train
 The Governor who must be wise and
 good,
 And temper with the sternness of the
 brain
 Thoughts motherly, and meek as woman-
 hood.
 Wisdom doth live with children round
 her knees:
 Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the
 talk
 Man holds with week-day man in the
 hourly walk
 Of the mind's business: these are the
 degrees

By which true Sway doth mount; this
 is the stalk
 True Power doth grow on; and her rights
 are these. 1802. 1802.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER
 BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3, 1802

"We left London on Saturday morning at half-past five or six, the 30th of July. We mounted the Dover coach at Charing Cross. It was a beautiful morning. The city, St. Paul's, with the river, and a multitude of little boats, made a most beautiful sight as we crossed Westminster Bridge. The houses were not overhung by their cloud of smoke, and they were spread out endlessly; yet the sun shone so brightly, with such a fierce light, that there was even something like the purity of one of nature's own grand spectacles." (*Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal*, July, 1802.)

EARTH has not anything to show more
 fair;
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass
 by
 A sight so touching in its majesty:
 This City now doth, like a garment,
 wear
 The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
 All bright and glittering in the smoke-
 less air.
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendor, valley, rock, or
 hill;
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
 The river glideth at his own sweet will:
 Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still!
 1802. 1807.

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE,
 NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802

"We had delightful walks after the heat of the day was passed—seeing far off in the west the coast of England like a cloud crested with Dover Castle, which was but like the summit of the cloud—the evening star and the glory of the sky, the reflections in the water were more beautiful than the sky itself, purple waves brighter than precious stones, for ever melting away upon the sands. . . . Nothing in romance was ever half so beautiful. Now came in view, as the evening star sunk down, and the colors of the west faded away, the two lights of England." (*Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal*, August, 1802.)

FAIR Star of evening, Splendor of the
 west,
 Star of my Country!—on the horizon's
 brink

Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem,
 to sink
 On England's bosom; yet well pleased
 to rest,
 Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest
 Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I
 think,
 Should'st be my Country's emblem; and
 should'st wink,
 Bright Star! with laughter on her ban-
 ners, drest
 In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky
 spot
 Beneath thee, that is England; there she
 lies.
 Blessings be on you both! one hope, one
 lot,
 One life, one glory!—I, with many a fear
 For my dear Country, many heartfelt
 sighs,
 Among men who do not love her, linger
 here. 1802. 1807.

W.

IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING,
 CALM AND FREE

This was composed on the beach near Calais, in the autumn of 1802. (*Wordsworth*.)

The last six lines are addressed to Wordsworth's sister Dorothy. See note to the preceding Sonnet.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
 The holy time is quiet as a Nun
 Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
 The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the
 Sea:
 Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion make
 A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
 Dear Child! dear Girl! that walkest
 with me here,
 If thou appear untouched by solemn
 thought,
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the
 year;
 And worship'st at the Temple's inner
 shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it
 not. 1802. 1807.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE
 VENETIAN REPUBLIC

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in
 fee;
 And was the safeguard of the west: the
 worth

Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
 Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
 She was a maiden City, bright and free;
 No guile seduced, no force could violate;
 And when she took unto herself a Mate,
 She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
 And what if she had seen those glories
 fade,
 Those titles vanish, and that strength
 decay;
 Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
 When her long life hath reached its final
 day:
 Men are we, and must grieve when even
 the Shade
 Of that which once was great, is passed
 away. 1802. 1807.

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of
 men!
 Whether the whistling Rustic tend his
 plough
 Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
 Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless
 den;—
 O miserable Chieftain! where and when
 Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not;
 do thou
 Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful
 brow:
 Though fallen thyself, never to rise
 again,
 Live, and take comfort. Thou hast
 left behind
 Powers that will work for thee; air,
 earth, and skies;
 There's not a breathing of the common
 wind
 That will forget thee; thou hast great
 allies;
 Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
 And love, and man's unconquerable
 mind. 1802. 1803.

NEAR DOVER, SEPTEMBER, 1802

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood;
 And saw, while sea was calm and air
 was clear,
 The coast of France—the coast of France
 how near!
 Drawn almost into frightful neighbor-
 hood.
 I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood
 Was like a lake, or river bright and
 fair,

A span of waters; yet what power is
 there!
 What mightiness for evil and for good!
 Even so doth God protect us if we be
 Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and
 waters roll,
 Strength to the brave, and Power, and
 Deity;
 Yet in themselves are nothing! One
 decree
 Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the
 soul
 Only, the Nations shall be great and free.
 1802. 1807.

N.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802

This was written immediately after my return
 from France to London, when I could not but
 be struck, as here described, with the vanity
 and parade of our own country, especially in
 great towns and cities, as contrasted with the
 quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the
 revolution had produced in France. This must
 be borne in mind, or else the reader may think
 that in this and the succeeding Sonnets I have
 exaggerated the mischief engendered and fos-
 tered among us by undisturbed wealth. It would
 not be easy to conceive with what a depth of feel-
 ing I entered into the struggle carried on by the
 Spaniards for their deliverance from the usurped
 power of the French. Many times have I gone
 from Allan Bank in Grasmere vale, where we
 were then residing, to the top of the Raise-gap
 as it is called, so late as two o'clock in the morn-
 ing to meet the carrier bringing the newspaper
 from Keswick. Imperfect traces of the state of
 mind in which I then was may be found in my
 Tract on the Convention of Cintra, as well as in
 these Sonnets. (Wordsworth.)

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must
 look
 For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
 To think that now our life is only drest
 For show; mean handy-work of crafts-
 man, cook,
 Or groom!—We must run glittering like
 a brook
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:
 The wealthiest man among us is the
 best:
 No grandeur now in nature or in book
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
 This is idolatry; and these we adore:
 Plain living and high thinking are no
 more:
 The homely beauty of the good old
 cause
 Is gone; our peace, our fearful inno-
 cence,
 And pure religion breathing household
 laws. 1802. 1807.

W. LONDON, 1802

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour;
 England hath need of thee; she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
 Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
 Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.
1802. 1807.

GREAT MEN HAVE BEEN AMONG US

GREAT men have been among us; hands
 that penned
 And tongues that uttered wisdom—better none:
 The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,
 Young Vane, and others who called
 Milton friend.
 These moralists could act and comprehend:
 They knew how genuine glory was put on;
 Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
 In splendor: what strength was, that would not bend
 But in magnanimous meekness. France,
 'tis strange,
 Hath brought forth no such souls as we
 had then.
 Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!
 No single volume paramount. no code,
 No master spirit, no determined road;
 But equally a want of books and men!
1802. 1807.

W. IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
 Of British freedom, which, to the open sea

Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
 Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, unwithstood."
 Roused though it be full often to a mood
 Which spurns the check of salutary bands,
 That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
 Should perish; and to evil and to good
 Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
 Armory of the invincible Knights of old:
 We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
 That Shakspeare spake; the faith and morals hold
 Which Milton held.—In everything we are sprung
 Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold. *1802 or 1803. April 16, 1803.*

WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed
 Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
 When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
 The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
 I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?
 Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
 Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
 Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
 For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
 In thee a bulwark for the cause of men:
 And I by my affection was beguiled:
 What wonder if a Poet now and then,
 Among the many movements of his mind,
 Felt for thee as a lover or a child!
1802 or 1803. Sept. 17, 1803.

TO HARTLEY COLERIDGE

SIX YEARS OLD

O THOU! whose fancies from afar are brought;
 Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
 And fittest to unutterable thought
 The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol;

Thou faery voyager ! that dost float
 In such clear water, that thy boat
 May rather seem
 .To brood on air than on an earthly
 stream ;
 Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
 Where earth and heaven do make one
 imagery ;
 O blessed vision ! happy child !
 Thou art so exquisitely wild,
 I think of thee with many fears
 For what may be thy lot in future years.
 I thought of times when Pain might
 be thy guest,
 Lord of thy house and hospitality ;
 And Grief, uneasy lover ! never rest
 But when she sate within the touch of
 thee.
 O too industrious folly !
 O vain and causeless melancholy !
 Nature will either end thee quite ;
 Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
 Preserve for thee, by individual right,
 A young lamb's heart among the full-
 grown flocks.
 What hast thou to do with sorrow,
 Or the injuries of to-morrow ?
 Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn
 brings forth,
 Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,
 Or to be trailed along the soiling earth ;
 A gem that glitters while it lives,
 And no forewarning gives ;
 But, at the touch of wrong, without a
 strife
 Slips in a moment out of life.

1802. 1807.

TO THE DAISY

In youth from rock to rock I went,
 From hill to hill in discontent
 Of pleasure high and turbulent,
 Most pleased when most uneasy ;
 But now my own delights I make,—
 My thirst at every rill can slake,
 And gladly Nature's love partake,
 Of Thee, sweet Daisy !
 Thee Winter in the garland wears
 That thinly decks his few gray hairs ;
 Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
 That she may sun thee ;
 Whole Summer-fields are thine by right ;
 And Autumn, melancholy Wight !
 Doth in thy crimson head delight
 When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
 Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane ;

Pleased at his greeting thee again ;

Yet nothing daunted,
 Nor grieved if thou be set at nought :
 And oft alone in nooks remote
 We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
 When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews
 The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose ;
 Proud be the rose, with rains and dews
 Her head impearling ;
 Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,
 Yet hast not gone without thy fame ;
 Thou art indeed by many a claim
 The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,
 Or, some bright day of April sky,
 Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie
 Near the green holly,
 And wearily at length should fare ;
 He needs but look about, and there
 Thou art !—a friend at hand, to scare
 His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,
 Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,
 Have I derived from thy sweet power
 Some apprehension ;
 Some steady love ; some brief delight ;
 Some memory that had taken flight ;
 Some chime of fancy wrong or right ;
 Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,
 I drink out of an humbler urn
 A lowlier pleasure ;
 The homely sympathy that heeds
 The common life our nature breeds ;
 A wisdom fitted to the needs
 Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,
 When thou art up, alert and gay,
 Then, cheerful Flower ! my spirits play
 With kindred gladness :
 And when, at dusk, by dews oppress
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
 Hath often eased my pensive breast
 Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
 All seasons through, another debt,
 Which I, wherever thou art met,
 To thee am owing ;
 An instinct call it, a blind sense ;
 A happy, genial influence,
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence
 Nor whither going.

Child of the Year! that round dost run
Thy pleasant course,—when day's begun
As ready to salute the sun

As lark or leveret,
Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain;
Nor be less dear to future men
Than in old time; thou not in vain
Art Nature's favorite.¹ 1802. 1807.

TO THE SAME FLOWER

With little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Daisy! again I talk to thee,

For thou art worthy,
Thou unassuming Common-place
Of Nature, with that homely face,
And yet with something of a grace,
Which Love makes for thee!

Of on the dappled turf at ease
I sit, and play with smiles,
Loose types of things through all degrees,

Thoughts of thy raising:
And many a fond and idle name
I give to thee, for praise or blame,
As is the humor of the game,
While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port;
Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,
In thy simplicity the sport
Of all temptations;
A queen in crown of rubies drest;
A starveling in a scanty vest;
Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
Thy appellations.

A little cyclops, with one eye
Staring to threaten and defy,
That thought comes next—and instantly
The freak is over,

The shape will vanish—and behold
A silver shield with boss of gold,
That spreads itself, some faery bold
In fight to cover!

I see thee glittering from afar—
And then thou art a pretty star;
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee!
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest;—
May peace come never to his nest,
Who shall reprove thee!

¹ See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honors formerly paid to this flower.
(Wordsworth.)

Bright Flower! for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast,

Sweet silent creature!
That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature! 1802. 1807.

TO THE DAISY

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is every-
where,
Bold in maternal Nature's care,
And all the long year through, the heir
Of joy or sorrow;
Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
The forest thorough!

Is it that Man is soon deprest?
A thoughtless Thing! who, once un-
blest,
Does little on his memory rest,
Or on his reason,
And Thou would'st teach him how to
find
A shelter under every wind,
A hope for times that are unkind
And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,
With friends to greet thee, or without,
Yet pleased and willing;
Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
And all things suffering from all,
Thy function apostolical
In peace fulfilling. 1802. 1807.

THE GREEN LINNET

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that
shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
With brightest sunshine round me
spread
Of spring's unclouded weather,
In this sequestered nook how sweet
To sit upon my orchard-seat!
And birds and flowers once more to
greet,
My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest:
Hail to Thee, far above the rest
In joy of voice and pinion!

Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,
 Presiding Spirit here to-day,
 Hast lead the revels of the May;
 And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flow-
 ers,
 Make all one band of paramours,
 Thou, ranging up and down the bowers.
 Art sole in thy employment:
 A Life, a Presence like the Air,
 Scattering thy gladness without care,
 Too blest with any one to pair;
 Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,
 That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
 Behold him perched in ecstasies,
 Yet seeming still to hover;
 There! where the flutter of his wings
 Upon his back and body flings
 Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
 That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
 A Brother of the dancing leaves;
 Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves
 Pours forth his song in gushes;
 As if by that exulting strain
 He mocked and treated with disdain
 The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
 While fluttering in the bushes.
 1803. 1807.

YEW-TREES

Compare the note on *A Night-Piece*.

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton
 Vale,
 Which to this day stands single, in the
 midst
 Of its own darkness, as it stood of
 yore;
 Not loth to furnish weapons for the
 bands
 Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched
 To Scotland's heaths; or those that
 crossed the sea
 And drew their sounding bows at Azin-
 cour,
 Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.
 Of vast circumference and gloom pro-
 found
 This solitary Tree! a living thing
 Produced too slowly ever to decay;
 Of form and aspect too magnificent
 To be destroyed. But worthier still of
 note

Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
 Joined in one solemn and capacious
 grove;
 Huge trunks; and each particular trunk
 a growth
 Of intertwined fibres serpentine
 Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved;
 Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and
 looks
 That threaten the profane;—a pillared
 shade,
 Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown
 hue,
 By sheddings from the pining umbrage
 tinged
 Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
 Of boughs, as if for festal purpose,
 decked
 With unrejoicing berries—ghostly
 Shapes
 May meet at noontide; Fear and trem-
 bling Hope,
 Silence and Foresight; Death the Skele-
 ton
 And Time the Shadow;—there to cele-
 brate,
 As in a natural temple scattered o'er
 With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
 United worship; or in mute repose
 To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
 Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost
 caves. 1803. 1815.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS

W

1803

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

For illustration, see my *Sister's Journal*,
 (*Wordsworth*).

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,
 At thought of what I now behold:
 As vapors breathed from dungeons
 cold,
 Strike pleasure dead,
 So sadness comes from out the mould
 Where Burns is laid.
 And have I then thy bones so near,
 And thou forbidden to appear?
 As if it were thyself that's here
 I shrink with pain;
 And both my wishes and my fear
 Alike are vain.
 Off weight—nor press on weight!—
 away
 Dark thoughts!—they came, but not to
 stay;

With chastened feelings would I pay
The tribute due
To him, and aught that hides his clay
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius "glinted" forth,
Rose like a star that touching earth,
For so it seems,
Doth glorify its humble birth
With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
The struggling heart, where be they
now?—
Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
The prompt, the brave,
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
And silent grave.

I mourned with thousands, but as one
More deeply grieved, for He was gone
Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
And showed my youth
How Verse may build a princely throne
On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues and with it blends,—
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
By Skiddaw seen,—
Neighbors we were, and loving friends
We might have been;

True friends though diversely inclined;
But heart with heart and mind with
mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined,
Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow;
Thou "poor Inhabitant below,"
At this dread moment—even so—
Might we together
Have sate and talked where gowans
blow,
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been
placed
Within my reach; of knowledge graced
By fancy what a rich repast!
But why go on?—
Oh! spare to sweep, thou mournful
blast,
His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
(Not three weeks past the Stripling
died,)

Lies gathered to his Father's side,
Soul-moving sight!
Yet one to which is not denied
Some sad delight:

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
Hath early found among the dead,
Harbored where none can be misled,
Wronged, or distressed;
And surely here it may be said
That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
Checked oft-times in a devious race,
May He who halloweth the place
Where Man is laid
Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
For which it prayed!

Sighing I turned away; but ere
Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,
Music that sorrow comes not near,
A ritual hymn,
Chanted in love that casts out fear
By Seraphim.

1803. 1845.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

AT INVERSENEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND

This delightful creature and her demeanor are particularly described in my Sister's Journal. (Wordsworth.)

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower!
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head;
And these gray rocks; that household
lawn;

Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn
This fall of water that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake;
This little bay; a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy Abode—
In truth together do ye seem
Like something fashioned in a dream;
Such Forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep!
But, O fair Creature! in the light
Of common day, so heavenly bright,
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art
I bless thee with a human heart;
God shield thee to thy latest years!
Thee neither know I, nor thy peers;
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
 For thee when I am far away :
 For never saw I mien, or face,
 In which more plainly I could trace
 Benignity and home-bred sense
 Ripening in perfect innocence.
 Here scattered, like a random seed,
 Remote from men, Thou dost not need
 The embarrassed look of shy distress,
 And maidenly shamefacedness :
 Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
 The freedom of a Mountaineer :
 A face with gladness overspread !
 Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !
 And seemliness complete, that sways
 Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
 With no restraint, but such as springs
 From quick and eager visitings
 Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
 Of thy few words of English speech :
 A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
 That gives thy gestures grace and life !
 So have I, not unmoved in mind,
 Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
 Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
 For thee who art so beautiful ?
 O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
 Beside thee in some heathy dell ;
 Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
 A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess !
 But I could frame a wish for thee
 More like a grave reality :
 Thou art to me but as a wave
 Of the wild sea ; and I would have
 Some claim upon thee, if I could,
 Though but of common neighborhood.
 What joy to hear thee, and to see !
 Thy elder Brother I would be,
 Thy Father—anything to thee !
 Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its
 grace

Hath led me to this lonely place.
 Joy have I had ; and going hence
 I bear away my recompense.
 In spots like these it is we prize
 Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :
 Then, why should I be loth to stir ?
 I feel this place was made for her ;
 To give new pleasure like the past,
 Continued long as life shall last.
 Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
 Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part :
 For I, methinks, till I grow old,
 As fair before me shall behold,
 As I do now, the cabin small,
 The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;
 And Thee, the spirit of them all !

1803. 1807.

W- STEPPING WESTWARD

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed Women, one of whom said to us by way of greeting, "What, you are stepping westward ?" (*Wordsworth.*)

"What, you are stepping westward ?"
 —"Yea."

—'Twould be a *wildish* destiny,
 If we, who thus together roam
 In a strange Land, and far from home,
 Were in this place the guests of Chance ;
 Yet who would stop, or fear to advance
 Though home or shelter he had none,
 With such a sky to lead him on ?

The dewy ground was dark and cold ;
 Behind, all gloomy to behold ;
 And stepping westward seemed to be
 A kind of *heavenly* destiny :
 I liked the greeting ; 't was a sound
 Of something without place or bound ;
 And seemed to give me spiritual right
 To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
 Was walking by her native lake :
 The salutation had to me
 The very sound of courtesy :
 Its power was felt ; and while my eye
 Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,
 The echo of the voice enwrought
 A human sweetness with the thought
 Of travelling through the world that lay
 Before me in my endless way.

1803. 1807.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass !
 Reaping and singing by herself ;
 Stop here, or gently pass !
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
 And sings a melancholy strain ;
 O listen ! for the Vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chant
 More welcome notes to weary bands
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands :
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
 In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago :
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day ?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending ;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending ;—
I listened, motionless and still ;
And, as I mounted up the hill
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

1803. 1807.

W. YARROW UNVISITED

See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow ; in particular, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning "Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,—
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow !—"
(Wordsworth).

FROM Stirling castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled ;
Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled ;
And when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my "*winsome Marrow*,"
"Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling,
Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own ;
Each maiden to her dwelling !
On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow !
But we will downward with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us ;
And Dryborough, where with chiming
Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus ;
There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow :
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow ?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare,
That glides the dark hills under ?
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder."

—Strange words they seemed of slight
and scorn

My True-love sighed for sorrow ;
And looked me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow !

"Oh ! green," said I, "are Yarrow's
holms,
And sweet is Yarrow flowing !
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,
But we will leave it growing.
O'er hilly path, and open Strath,
We'll wander Scotland thorough ;
But, though so near, we will not turn
Into the dale of Yarrow.

"Let bees and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;
The swan on still St. Mary's Lake
Float double, swan and shadow !
We will not see them ; will not go,
To-day, nor yet to-morrow,
Enough if in our hearts we know
There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown !
It must, or we shall rue it :
We have a vision of our own ;
Ah ! why should we undo it ?
The treasured dreams of times long past,
We'll keep them, winsome Marrow !
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,
'Twill be another Yarrow !

"If Care with freezing years should
come,
And wandering seem but folly,—
Should we be loth to stir from home,
And yet be melancholy ;
Should life be dull, and spirits low,
'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,
That earth has something yet to show,
The bonny holms of Yarrow !"

1803. 1807.

W.

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

"In my *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality in Childhood*, I do not profess to give a literal representation of the state of the affections and of the moral being in childhood. I record my own feelings at that time—my absolute spirituality, my 'all-soulness,' if I may so speak. At that time I could not believe that I should lie down quietly in the grave, and that my body would moulder into dust." (Knight's *Wordsworth*, II, 326. See also, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, the article "Poetry.")

I

THERE was a time when meadow, grove,
and stream,

The earth, and every common sight,
 To me did seem
 Apparell'd in celestial light,
 The glory and the freshness of a dream.
 It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—
 Turn whereso'er I may,
 By night or day,
 The things which I have seen I now can
 see no more.

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,
 And lovely is the Rose,
 The Moon doth with delight
 Look round her when the heavens are
 bare ;
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair ;
 The sunshine is a glorious birth ;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
 That there hath past away a glory from
 the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous
 song,
 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
 To me alone there came a thought of
 grief ;
 A timely utterance gave that thought
 relief,
 And I again am strong :
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from
 the steep ;
 No more shall grief of mine the season
 wrong ;
 I hear the Echoes through the moun-
 tains throng,
 The Winds come to me from the fields
 of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay ;
 Land and sea
 Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every Beast keep holiday ;—
 Thou Child of Joy,
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts,
 thou happy Shepherd-boy !

IV

Ye bless'd Creatures, I have heard the
 call
 Ye to each other make ; I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your
 jubilee ;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal,
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel
 it all.

Oh evil day ! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
 And the Children are culling
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines
 warm,
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's
 arm :—
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,
 A single Field which I have looked
 upon,
 Both of them speak of something that is
 gone :
 The Pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat :
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
 Where is it now, the glory and the
 dream ?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forget-
 ting :
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's
 Star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar :
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home :
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
 Shades of the prison-house begin to
 close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But he beholds the light, and whence it
 flows,
 He sees it in his joy ;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the
 east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended ;
 At length the Man perceives it die
 away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her
 own ;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural
 kind,
 And, even with something of a Mother's
 mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate
 Man,

Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he
came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born
blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !
See, where 'mid work of his own hand
he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's
eyes !
See, at his feet, some little plan or
chart,
Some fragment from his dream of hu-
man life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned
art ;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral ;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song :
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little Actor cons another part ;
Filling from time to time his " humor-
ous stage "
With all the Persons, down to palsied
Age,
That Life brings with her in her equip-
age ;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth
belie
Thy Soul's immensity ;
Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost
keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among the
blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal
deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !
On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to
find,
in darkness lost, the darkness of the
grave ;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a
Slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by ;

Thou little Child, yet glorious in the
might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's
height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou
provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at
strife ?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly
freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a
weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

IX

O joy ! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive !
The thought of our past years in me
doth breed
Perpetual benediction : not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be
blest—
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering
in his breast :—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise ;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings ;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts before which our mortal
Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing sur-
prised :
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power
to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the
being
Of the eternal Silence : truths that
wake,
To perish never ;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad en-
deavor,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy !
Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,

Our Souls have sight of that immortal
 sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the Children sport upon the
 shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling
 evermore.

X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous
 song!
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound!
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May!
 What though the radiance which was
 once so bright
 Be now forever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the
 hour
 Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the
 flower;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be;
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering;
 In the faith that looks through
 death,
 In years that bring the philosophic
 mind.

XI

And O ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills,
 and Groves,
 Forebode not any severing of our loves!
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your
 might;
 I only have relinquished one delight
 To live beneath your more habitual
 sway.
 I love the Brooks which down their
 channels fret,
 Even more than when I tripped lightly
 as they;
 The innocent brightness of a new-born
 Day

Is lovely yet;
 The Clouds that gather round the set-
 ting sun
 Do take a sober coloring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mor-
 tality;
 Another race hath been, and other
 palms are won.

Thanks to the human heart by which
 we live,
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and
 fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows
 can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for
 tears. 1803-6. 1807.

W. TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,
 I hear thee and rejoice.
 O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
 Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass
 Thy twofold shout I hear,
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,
 At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,
 Of sunshine and of flowers,
 Thou bringest unto me a tale
 Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
 Even yet thou art to me
 No bird, but an invisible thing,
 A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days
 I listened to; that Cry
 Which made me look a thousand ways;
 In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
 Through woods and on the green;
 And thou wert still a hope, a love;
 Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;
 Can lie upon the plain
 And listen, till I do beget
 That golden time again.

O blessed Bird! the earth we pace
 Again appears to be
 An unsubstantial, faery place;
 That is fit home for Thee!

1802. 1807.

W. SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF
DELIGHT

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The germ of
 this poem was four lines composed as a part of
 the verses on the Highland Girl. Though begin-
 ning in this way, it was written from my heart,
 as is sufficiently obvious. (*Wordsworth.*)

SHE was a Phantom of delight
 When first she gleamed upon my sight;

A lovely Apparition sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and
smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A Traveller between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and
skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light.

1804. 1807.

W. I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The Daffodils grew and still grow on the margin of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves. (Wordsworth.)

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but
they

Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,

In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had
brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

1804. 1807.

THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was well known to Mrs. Wordsworth, to my Sister, and, I believe, to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to enquire of him after her son. (Wordsworth.)

WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,
Where art thou, worse to me than dead!
Oh find me, prosperous or undone!
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,
Why am I ignorant of the same,
That I may rest, and neither blame
Nor sorrow may attend thy name?

Seven years, alas! to have received
No tidings of an only child;
To have despaired, have hoped, believed,
And been for evermore beguiled;
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss!
I catch at them, and then I miss;
Was ever darkness like to this?

He was among the prime in worth,
An object beauteous to behold;
Well born, well bred; I sent him forth
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold:
If things ensued that wanted grace,
As hath been said, they were not base;
And never blush was on my face.

Ah! little doth the young one dream,
When full of play and childish cares,
What power is in his wildest scream,
Heard by his mother unawares!
He knows it not, he cannot guess:
Years to a mother bring distress;
But do not make her love the less.

Neglect me! no, I suffered long
From that ill thought; and, being blind,
Said, "Pride shall help me in my wrong;
Kind mother have I been, as kind
As ever breathed;" and that is true;
I've wet my path with tears like dew,
Weeping for him when no one knew.

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,
 Hopeless of honor and of gain,
 Oh! do not dread thy mother's door;
 Think not of me with grief and pain:
 I now can see with better eyes;
 And worldly grandeur I despise,
 And fortune with her gifts and lies.

Alas! the fowls of heaven have wings,
 And blasts of heaven will aid their flight;
 They mount—how short a voyage brings
 The wanderers back to their delight!
 Chains tie us down by land and sea;
 And wishes, vain as mine, may be
 All that is left to comfort thee.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,
 Maimed, mangled by inhuman men;
 Or thou upon a desert thrown
 Inheritest the lion's den;
 Or hast been summoned to the deep,
 Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep
 An incommunicable sleep.

I look for ghosts; but none will force
 Their way to me: 'tis falsely said
 That there was ever intercourse
 Between the living and the dead;
 For, surely, then I should have sight
 Of him I wait for day and night,
 With love and longings infinite.

My apprehensions come in crowds;
 I dread the rustling of the grass;
 The very shadows of the clouds
 Have power to shake me as they pass:
 I question things and do not find
 One that will answer to my mind;
 And all the world appears unkind.

Beyond participation lie
 My troubles, and beyond relief:
 If any chance to heave a sigh,
 They pity me, and not my grief.
 Then come to me, my Son, or send
 Some tidings that my woes may end;
 I have no other earthly friend!

1804f 1807.

ODE TO DUTY

W. STERN Daughter of the Voice of God!
 O Duty! if that name thou love
 Who art a light to guide, a rod
 To check the erring, and reprove;
 Thou, who art victory and law
 When empty terrors overawe:
 From vain temptations dost set free:
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail
 humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
 Be on them; who, in love and truth,
 Where no misgiving is, rely
 Upon the genial sense of youth:
 Glad Hearts! without reproach or blot
 Who do thy work, and know it not:
 Oh! if through confidence misplaced
 They fail, thy saving arms, dread
 Power! around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,
 And happy will our nature be,
 When love is an unerring light,
 And joy its own security.
 And they a blissful course may hold
 Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
 Live in the spirit of this creed;
 Yet seek thy firm support, according to
 their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,
 No sport of every random gust,
 Yet being to myself a guide,
 Too blindly have reposed my trust:
 And oft, when in my heart was heard
 Thy timely mandate, I deferred
 The task, in smoother walks to stray;
 But thee I now would serve more
 strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
 Or strong compunction in me wrought,
 I supplicate for thy control;
 But in the quietness of thought:
 Me this unchartered freedom tires;
 I feel the weight of chance-desires:
 My hopes no more must change their
 name,
 I long for a repose that ever is the
 same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
 The Godhead's most benignant grace;
 Nor know we anything so fair
 As is the smile upon thy face:
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
 And fragrance in thy footing treads;
 Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
 And the most ancient heavens, through
 Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
 I call thee: I myself commend
 Unto thy guidance from this hour;
 Oh, let my weakness have an end!
 Give unto me, made lowly wise,
 The spirit of self-sacrifice;
 The confidence of reason give;
 And in the light of truth thy Bondman
 let me live! 1805. 1807.

TO A SKY-LARK

Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
 For thy song, Lark, is strong;
 Up with me, up with me into the clouds!
 Singing, singing,
 With clouds and sky about thee ringing
 Lift me, guide me till I find
 That spot which seems so to thy mind!

I have walked through wildernesses
 dreary
 And to-day my heart is weary;
 Had I now the wings of a Faery,
 Up to thee would I fly.
 There is madness about thee, and joy
 divine
 In that song of thine;
 Lift me, guide me high and high
 To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning
 Thou art laughing and scorning;
 Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy
 rest.
 And, though little troubled with sloth,
 Drunken Lark! thou would'st be loth
 To be such a traveller as I.
 Happy, happy Liver,
 With a soul as strong as a mountain
 river
 Pouring out praise to the Almighty
 Giver,
 Joy and jollity be with us both!

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,
 Through prickly moors or dusty ways
 must wind;
 But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
 As full of gladness and as free of
 heaven,
 I, with my fate contented, will plod on,
 And hope for higher raptures, when
 life's day is done. 1805. 1807.

W. ELEGIAC STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE
 CASTLE, IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR
 GEORGE BEAUMONT

I WAS thy neighbor once, thou rugged
 Pile!
 Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of
 thee:
 I saw thee every day; and all the while
 Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!
 So like, so very like, was day to day!
 Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was
 there;
 It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed
 no sleep;
 No mood, which season takes away, or
 brings:
 I could have fancied that the mighty
 Deep
 Was even the gentlest of all gentle
 Things.

Ah! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's
 hand,
 To express what then I saw; and add
 the gleam,
 The light that never was, on sea or
 land,
 The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary
 Pine
 Amid a world how different from this!
 Beside a sea that could not cease to
 smile;
 On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-
 house divine
 Of peaceful years; a chronicle of
 heaven:—
 Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
 The very sweetest had to thee been
 given.

A picture had it been of lasting ease,
 Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;
 No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
 Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
 Such Picture would I at that time have
 made:
 And seen the soul of truth in every part,
 A steadfast peace that might not be
 betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no
 more;
 I have submitted to a new control:
 A power is gone, which nothing can
 restore;
 A deep distress hath humanized my
 Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been :
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old ;
This, which I know, I speak with mind
serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend ! who would
have been the Friend,
If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but
commend ;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work !—yet wise and
well,
Well chosen in the spirit that is here ;
That Hulk which labors in the deadly
swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge Castle, standing here sub-
lime,
I love to see the look with which it
braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armor of old
time,
The lightning, the fierce wind, and
trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives
alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the
Kind !
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied ; for 't is surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient
cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be
borne !
Such sights, or worse, as are before me
here.—
Not without hope we suffer and we
mourn. 1805. 1807.

TO A YOUNG LADY

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAK-
ING LONG WALKS IN THE COUNTRY

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail !
—There is a nest in a green dale,
A harbor and a hold ;
Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt
see
Thy own heart-stirring days, and be
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,
And treading among flowers of joy

Which at no season fade,
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling
Shalt show us how divine a thing
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee, when gray hairs are nigh,
A melancholy slave ;
But an old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

1801? February 11, 1802.

W. FRENCH REVOLUTION

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS
COMMENCEMENT

An extract from the long poem of my own
poetical education. It was first published by
Coleridge in his "Friend," which is the reason
of its having had a place in every edition of my
poems since. (*Wordsworth.*) From *The Prelude*,
Bk. XI.

OH ! pleasant exercise of hope and joy !
For mighty were the auxiliars which
then stood
Upon our side, we who were strong in
love !

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven !—
Oh ! times,
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding
ways

Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in romance !
When Reason seemed the most to assert
her rights,
When most intent on making of herself
A prime Enchantress—to assist the work,
Which then was going forward in her
name !

Not favored spots alone, but the whole
earth,
The beauty wore of promise, that which
sets

(As at some moment might not be unfelt
Among the bowers of paradise itself).
The budding rose above the rose full
blown.

What temper at the prospect did not
wake
To happiness unthought of ? The inert
Were roused, and lively natures rapt
away !

They who had fed their childhood upon
dreams,

The playfellows of fancy, who had made
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and
strenth

Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had
 stirred
 Among the grandest objects of the sense,
 And dealt with whatsoever they found
 there
 As if they had within some lurking right
 To wield it ;—they, too, who, of gentle
 mood,
 Had watched all gentle motions, and to
 these
 Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers
 more mild,
 And in the region of their peaceful
 selves ;—
 Now was it that both found, the meek
 and lofty
 Did both find, helpers to their heart's
 desire,
 And stuff at hand, plastic as they could
 wish ;
 Were called upon to exercise their skill,
 Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,
 Or some secreted island, Heaven knows
 where !
 But in the very world, which is the
 world
 Of all of us,—the place where in the end
 We find our happiness, or not at all !
 1804. October 26, 1809.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

Suggested in part by an event which all Eng-
 land was lamenting—the death of Lord Nelson—
 and in part by the personal loss, which he still
 felt so keenly, his brother John's removal. On
 the 4th of February, 1806, Southey wrote thus
 to Sir Walter Scott: . . . 'Wordsworth was
 with me last week; he has been of late more
 employed in correcting his poems than in writ-
 ing others; but one piece he has written, upon
 the ideal character of a soldier, than which I
 have never seen anything more full of meaning
 and sound thought. The subject was suggested
 by Nelson's most glorious death. . . .'
 (Knight, *Life of Wordsworth*, II, 46-7.)

WHO is the happy Warrior? Who is he
 That every man in arms should wish to
 be?
 —It is the generous Spirit, who, when
 brought
 Among the tasks of real life, hath
 wrought
 Upon the plan that pleased his boyish
 thought:
 Whose high endeavors are an inward
 light
 That makes the path before him always
 bright:
 Who, with a natural instinct to discern

What knowledge can perform, is dili-
 gent to learn;
 Abides by this resolve, and stops not
 there,
 But makes his moral being his prime
 care;
 Who, doomed to go in company with
 Pain,
 And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable
 train!
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
 In face of these doth exercise a power
 Which is our human nature's highest
 dower;
 Controls them and subdues, transmutes,
 bereaves
 Of their bad influence, and their good
 receives:
 By objects, which might force the soul
 to abate
 Her feeling, rendered more compassion-
 ate;
 Is placable—because occasions rise
 So often that demand such sacrifice;
 More skilful in self-knowledge, even
 more pure,
 As tempted more; more able to endure,
 As more exposed to suffering and dis-
 tress;
 Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
 —'Tis he whose law is reason; who de-
 pends
 Upon that law as on the best of friends;
 Whence, in a state where men are
 tempted still
 To evil for a guard against worse ill,
 And what in quality or act is best
 Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
 He labors good on good to fix, and owes
 To virtue every triumph that he knows:
 —Who, if he rise to station of command,
 Rises by open means; and there will
 stand
 On honorable terms, or else retire,
 And in himself possess his own desire;
 Who comprehends his trust, and to the
 same
 Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;
 And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in
 wait
 For wealth, or honors, or for worldly
 state;
 Whom they must follow; on whose head
 must fall,
 Like showers of manna, if they come at
 all:
 Whose powers shed round him in the
 common strife,
 Or mild concerns of ordinary life.

A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven
has joined

Great issues, good or bad for human
kind,

Is happy as a Lover ; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a Man in-
spired ;

And, through the heat of conflict, keeps
the law

In calmness made, and sees what he
foresaw ;

Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need :
—He who, though thus endued as with
a sense

And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle
scenes ;

Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he
be,

Are at his heart ; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve ;
More brave for this, that he hath much
to love :—

'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or
not—

Plays, in the many games of life, that
one

Where what he most doth value must
be won :

Whom neither shape of danger can dis-
may,

Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
Who, not content that former worth
stand fast,

Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpass :
Who, whether praise of him must walk
the earth

For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his
fame,

And leave a dead unprofitable name—
Finds comfort in himself and in his
cause ;

And, while the moral mist is gathering,
draws

His breath in confidence of Heaven's
applause :

This is the happy Warrior ; this is He
That every Man in arms should wish to
be

1806. 1807.

YES, IT WAS THE MOUNTAIN ECHO

YES, it was the mountain Echo,
Solitary, clear, profound,
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,
Giving to her sound for sound !

Unsolicited reply
To a babbling wanderer sent ;
Like her ordinary cry,
Like—but oh, how different !

Hears not also mortal Life ?
Hear not we, unthinking Creatures !
Slaves of folly, love, or strife—
Voices of two different natures ?

Have not *we* too ?—yes, we have
Answers, and we know not whence ;
Echoes from beyond the grave,
Recognized intelligence !

Such rebounds our inward ear
Catches sometimes from afar—
Listen, ponder, hold them dear ;
For of God,—of God they are.

1806. 1807.

W.

NUNS FRET NOT AT THEIR CON- VENT'S NARROW ROOM

In the cottage, Town-end, Grasmere, one after-
noon in 1801, my sister read to me the Sonnets of
Milton. I had long been well acquainted with
them, but I was particularly struck on that occa-
sion with the dignified simplicity and majestic
harmony that runs through most of them,—in
character so totally different from the Italian,
and still more so from Shakspeare's fine Sonnets.
I took fire, if I may be allowed to say so, and
produced three Sonnets the same afternoon, the
first I ever wrote except an irregular one at
school. Of these three, the only one I distinctly
remember is—"I grieved for Buonaparté." One
was never written down: the third, which was,
I believe, preserved, I cannot particularize.
(Wordsworth.)

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow
room ;

And hermits are contented with their
cells ;

And students with their pensive citadels ;
Maid at the wheel, the weaver at his
loom,

Sit blithe and happy ; bees that soar for
bloom,

High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove
bells :

In truth the prison, unto which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is : and hence for
me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be
bound
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of
ground ;
Pleased if some Souls (for such there
needs must be)
Who have felt the weight of too much
liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have
found. 1806 ? 1807.

W. PERSONAL TALK

I

I AM not One who much or oft delight
To season my fireside with personal
talk—
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
Or neighbors, daily, weekly, in my sight :
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies
bright,
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the
stalk,
These all wear out of me, like Forms,
with chalk
Painted on rich men's floors, for one
feast-night,
Better than such discourse doth silence
long,
Long, barren silence, square with my
desire ;
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
And listen to the flapping of the flame,
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

II

"Yet life," you say, "is life; we have
seen and see,
And with a living pleasure we describe ;
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe
The languid mind into activity.
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth
and glee
Are fostered by the comment and the
gibe."
Even be it so; yet still among your
tribe,
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank
not me !
Children are blest, and powerful; their
world lies
More justly balanced; partly at their
feet,
And part far from them: sweetest mel-
odies

Are those that are by distance made
more sweet ;
Whose mind is but the mind of his own
eyes,
He is a Slave; the meanest we can
meet !

III

Wings have we,—and as far as we can
go,
We may find pleasure: wilderness and
wood,
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that
mood
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.
Dreams, books are each a world; and
books, we know.
Are a substantial world, both pure and
good :
Round these, with tendrils strong as
flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will
grow.
There find I personal themes, a plente-
ous store,
Matter wherein right voluble I am,
To which I listen with a ready ear ;
Two shall be named, pre-eminently
dear,—
The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;
And heavenly Una with her milk-white
Lamb.

IV

Nor can I not believe but that hereby
Great gains are mine; for thus I live re-
mote
From evil-speaking; rancor, never
sought,
Comes to me not; malignant truth, or
lie.
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have
I
Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and
joyous thought :
And thus from day to day my little boat
Rocks in its harbor, lodging peaceably,
Blessings be with them—and eternal
praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler
cares—
The Poets, who on earth have made us
heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly
lays !
Oh! might my name be numbered
among theirs,
Then gladly would I end my mortal
days. 1806 ? 1807.

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US

THE world is too much with us ; late and soon,
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers ;
 Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !
 The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;
 For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;
 It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

1806 ? 1807.

TO SLEEP

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,
 One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees
 Murmuring : the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky ;
 I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
 Sleepless ! and soon the small birds' melodies
 Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees ;
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
 Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,
 And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any stealth :
 So do not let me wear to-night away :
 Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth ?
 Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !

1806 ? 1807.

NOVEMBER, 1806

ANOTHER year !—another deadly blow !
 Another mighty Empire overthrown !
 And We are left, or shall be left, alone ;
 The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.
 'Tis well ! from this day forward we shall know
 That in ourselves our safety must be sought ;
 That by our own right hands it must be wrought ;
 That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.
 O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer !
 We shall exult, if they who rule the land
 Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
 Wise, upright, valiant ; not a servile band,
 Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
 And honor which they do not understand.

1806. 1807.

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND

Two Voices are there ; one is of the sea,
 One of the mountains ; each a mighty Voice :
 In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
 They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
 There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
 Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :
 Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
 Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
 Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :
 Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;
 For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
 That mountain floods should thunder as before,
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
 And neither awful Voice be heard by thee ?

1807. 1807.

HERE PAUSE: THE POET CLAIMS
AT LEAST THIS PRAISE

HERE pause : the poet claims at least this
praise,
That virtuous Liberty hath been the
scope
Of his pure song, which did not shrink
from hope
In the worst moment of these evil days ;
From hope, the paramount *duty* that
Heaven lays,
For its own honor, on man's suffering
heart.
Never may from our souls one truth
depart—
That an accursed thing it is to gaze
On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled
eye ;
Nor—touched with due abhorrence of
their guilt
For whose dire ends tears flow, and
blood is spilt,
And justice labors in extremity—
Forget thy weakness, upon which is built
O wretched man, the throne of tyranny !
1811. 1815.

LAODAMIA

Written at Rydal Mount. The incident of the
trees growing and withering put the subject into
my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving
it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, has been
given to it by any of the Ancients who have
treated of it. It cost me more trouble than al-
most anything of equal length I have ever writ-
ten. (*Wordsworth.*)

"Laodamia is a very original poem ; I mean
original with reference to your own manner.
You have nothing like it. I should have seen
it in a strange place, and greatly admired it,
but not suspected its derivation. . ." (Lamb
to Wordsworth. Talfourd, *Final Memories of*
Charles Lamb, p. 151.)

"WITH sacrifice before the rising morn
Vows have I made by fruitless hope in-
spired ;
And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades
forlorn
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I
required :
Celestial pity I again implore ;—
Restore him to my sight—great Jove,
restore !"

So speaking, and by fervent love en-
dowed
With faith, the Suppliant heavenward
lifts her hands ;
While, like the sun emerging from a
cloud.

Her countenance brightens—and her
eye expands ;
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stat-
ure grows ;
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror ! what hath she perceived ?—O
joy !
What doth she look on ?—whom doth she
behold ?
Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy ?
His vital presence ? his corporeal mould !
It is—if sense deceive her not—'tis He ?
And a God leads him, wingéd Mercury !

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her
with his wand
That calms all fear ; "Such grace hath
crowned thy prayer,
Laodamia ! that at Jove's command
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper
air ;
He comes to tarry with thee three hours'
space ;
Accept the gift, behold him face to face !

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen
her Lord to clasp ;
Again that consummation she essayed ;
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp
As often as that eager grasp was made,
The Phantom parts—but parts to re-unite,
And re-assume his place before her sight.

"Protesiláus, lo ! thy guide is gone !
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy
voice :
This is our palace,—yonder is thy throne ;
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on
will rejoice.
Not to appal me have the gods bestowed
This precious boon ; and blest a sad
abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamia ! doth not leave
His gifts imperfect :—Spectre though I
be,
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive ;
But in reward of thy fidelity.
And something also did my worth obtain ;
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless
gain.

"Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle fore-
told
That the first Greek who touched the
Trojan strand
Should die ; but me the threat could not
withhold ;

A generous cause a victim did demand ;
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain ;
A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain.”

“Supreme of Heroes—bravest, noblest,
best !

Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,
Which then, when tens of thousands
were deprest

By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal
shore ;

Thou found'st—and I forgive thee—here
thou art—

A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

“But thou, though capable of sternest
deed,

Wert kind as resolute, and good as
brave :

And he, whose power restores thee, hath
decreed

Thou should'st elude the malice of the
grave :

Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
As when their breath enriched Thessa-
lian air.

“No Spectre greets me,—no vain Shadow
this ;

Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my
side !

Give, on this well-known couch, one
nuptial kiss

To me, this day, a second time thy
bride !”

Jove frowned in heaven : the conscious
Parcæ threw

Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

“This visage tells thee that my doom is
past :

Nor should the change be mourned, even
if the joys

Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish. Earth de-
stroys

Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains ;
Calm pleasures there abide—majestic
pains.

“Be taught, O faithful Consort, to con-
trol

Rebellious passion : for the Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the
soul ;

A fervent, not ungovernable, love.

Thy transports moderate ; and meekly
mourn

When I depart, for brief is my sojourn—”

“Ah, wherefore?—Did not Hercules by
force

Wrest from the guardian Monster of the
tomb

Alcestis, a reanimated corse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal
bloom ?

Medea's spells dispersed the weight of
years,

And Æson stood a youth 'mid youthful
peers.

“The Gods to us are merciful—and they
Yet further may relent : for mightier
far

Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the
sway

Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,

And though his favorite seat be feeble
woman's breast.

“But if thou goest, I follow—” “Peace !”
he said ;—

She looked upon him and was calmed
and cheered :

The ghastly color from his lips had fled :
In his deportment, shape, and mien, ap-
peared

Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,
Brought from a pensive though a happy
place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits
feel

In worlds whose course is equable and
pure ;

No fears to beat away—no strife to
heal—

The past unsighed for, and the future
sure ;

Spake of heroic arts in graver mood
Revived, with finer harmony pursued ;

Of all that is most beauteous—imaged
there

In happier beauty ; more pellucid
streams,

An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal
gleams ;

Climes which the sun, who sheds the
brightest day

Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which
hath earned

That privilege by virtue. “Ill,” said he,
“The end of man's existence I discerned,

Who from ignoble games and revelry

Could draw, when we had parted, vain
delight,
While tears were thy best pastime, day
and night ;

“And while my youthful peers before
my eyes
(Each hero following his peculiar bent)
Prepared themselves for glorious enter-
prise
By martial sports,—or, seated in the
tent,
Chieftains and kings in council were de-
tained ;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay en-
chained.

“The wished-for wind was given :—I
then revolved
The oracle, upon the silent sea ;
And, if no worthier led the way, re-
solved
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should
be
The foremost prow in pressing to the
strand,—
Mine the first blood that tinged the Tro-
jan sand.

“Yet bitter, oft-times bitter was the
pang
When of thy loss I thought, beloved
Wife !
On thee too fondly did my memory
hang,
And on the joys we shared in mortal
life,—
The paths which we had trod—these
fountains, flowers,
My new-planned cities, and unfinished
towers.

“But should suspense permit the Foe to
cry,
‘Behold they tremble !—haughty their
array,
Yet of their number no one dares to
die ?’
In soul I swept the indignity away :
Old frailties then recurred :—but lofty
thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance
wrought.

“And Thou, though strong in love, art
all too weak
In reason, in self-government too slow ;
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
Our blest re-union in the shades below.

The invisible world with thee hath sym-
pathized ;
Be thy affections raised and solemnized.

“Learn, by a mortal yearning, to as-
cend—
Seeking a higher object. Love was
given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that
end ;
For this the passion to excess was
driven—
That self might be annulled : her bond-
age prove
The fetters of a dream, opposed to
love.”—

Aloud she shrieked ! for Hermes reap-
pears !
Round the dear Shade she would have
clung—’t is vain :
The hours are past—too brief had they
been years ;
And him no mortal effort can detain :
Swift, toward the realms that know not
earthly day,
He through the portal takes his silent
way,
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse
she lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
She perished ; and, as for a wilful crime,
By the just Gods whom no weak pity
moved,
Was doomed to wear out her appointed
time,
Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather
flowers
Of blissful quiet ’mid unfading bowers.

—Yet tears to human suffering are due ;
And mortal hopes defeated and o’er-
thrown
Are mourned by man, and not by man
alone,
As fondly he believes.—Upon the side
Of Hellespont (such faith was enter-
tained)
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
From out the tomb of him for whom she
died ;
And ever, when such stature they had
gained
That Ilium’s walls were subject to their
view,
The trees’ tall summits withered at the
sight :
A constant interchange of growth and
blight !

1814. 1815.

YARROW VISITED

SEPTEMBER, 1814

As mentioned in my verses on the death of the Ettrick Shepherd, my first visit to Yarrow was in his company. We had lodged the night before at Traquhair, where Hogg had joined us . . . I seldom read or think of this poem without regretting that my dear Sister was not of the party, as she would have had so much delight in recalling the time when, travelling together in Scotland, we declined going in search of this celebrated stream, not altogether, I will frankly confess, for the reasons assigned in the poem on the occasion. (*Wordsworth.*)

AND is this—Yarrow?—*This* the Stream
Of which my fancy cherished,
So faithfully, a waking dream?
An image that hath perished!
O that some Minstrel's harp were near,
To utter notes of gladness,
And chase this silence from the air,
That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows
With uncontrolled meanderings;
Nor have these eyes by greener hills
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's
Lake
Is visibly delighted;
For not a feature of those hills
Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,
Save where that pearly whiteness
Is round the rising sun diffused,
A tender hazy brightness;
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes
All profitless dejection;
Though not unwilling here to admit
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?
His bed perchance was yon smooth
mound
On which the herd is feeding:
And haply from this crystal pool,
Now peaceful as the morning,
The Water-wraith ascended thrice—
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings
The haunts of happy Lovers,
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers:
And Pity sanctifies the Verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,

The unconquerable strength of love;
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation:
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy;
The grace of forest charms decayed,
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the
pomp
Of cultivated nature;
And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a Ruin hoary!
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening
bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in;
For manhood to enjoy his strength;
And age to wear away in!
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,
The wild-wood fruits to gather,
And on my True-love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather!
And what if I enwreathed my own!
'Twere no offence to reason;
The sober Hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone.
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;
A ray of fancy still survives—
Her sunshine plays upon thee!
Thy ever-youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure;
And glad some notes my lips can breathe,
Accordant to the measure.

The vapors linger round the Heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
Sad thought, which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow!
Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

1814. 1815.

TO B. R. HAYDON

B. R. Haydon, the painter, was for many years a friend of Wordsworth. On November 27, 1815, Haydon wrote: "I have benefited and have been supported in the troubles of life by your poetry. . . I will bear want, pain, misery, and blindness; but I will never yield one step I have gained on the road I am determined to travel over." Wordsworth's answer to this letter was the following sonnet.

HIGH is our calling, Friend!—Creative
Art
(Whether the instrument of words she
use,
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues.)
Demands the service of a mind and heart,
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest
part,
Heroically fashioned—to infuse
Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,
While the whole world seems adverse to
desert.
And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she
may,
Through long-lived pressure of obscure
distress,
Still to be strenuous for the bright re-
ward,
And in the soul admit of no decay,
Brook no continuance of weak-minded-
ness—
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard!
1815. 1816.

NOVEMBER 1

How clear, how keen, how marvellously
bright
The effluence from yon distant mount-
ain's head,
Which, strewn with snow smooth as the
sky can shed,
Shines like another sun—on mortal sight
Uprisen, as if to check approaching
Night,
And all her twinkling stars. Who now
would tread,
If so he might, yon mountain's glittering
head—
Terrestrial, but a surface, by the flight
Of sad mortality's earth-sullying wing,
Unswapt, unstained? Nor shall the
aërial Powers
Dissolve that beauty, destined to endure,
White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely
pure,
Through all vicissitudes, till genial
Spring
Has filled the laughing vales with wel-
come flowers. 1815. 1816.

SURPRISED BY JOY—IMPATIENT
AS THE WIND

This was in fact suggested by my daughter Catherine long after her death. (*Wordsworth.*)

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the
Wind
I turned to share the transport—Oh!
with whom
But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,
That spot which no vicissitude can find?
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my
mind—
But how could I forget thee? Through
what power,
Even for the least division of an hour,
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
To my most grievous loss?—That
thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever
bore,
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was
no more;
That neither present time, nor years un-
born
Could to my sight that heavenly face
restore. 1815? 1815.

HAST THOU SEEN, WITH FLASH
INCESSANT

HAST thou seen, with flash incessant,
Bubbles gliding under ice,
Bodied forth and evanescent,
No one knows by what device?

Such are thoughts!—A wind-swept
meadow
Mimicking a troubled sea,
Such is life; and death a shadow
From the rock eternity! 1818. 1820.

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF
EXTRAORDINARY SPLENDOR
AND BEAUTY

I

HAD this effulgence disappeared
With flying haste, I might have sent,
Among the speechless clouds, a look
Of blank astonishment;
But 'tis endued with power to stay,
And sanctify one closing day,
That frail Mortality may see—
What is?—ah no, but what can be!
Time was when field and watery cove

With modulated echoes rang,
While choirs of fervent Angels sang
Their vespers in the grove;
Or, crowning, star-like, each some
sovereign height,
Warbled, for heaven above and earth
below,
Strains suitable to both.—Such holy rite,
Methinks, if audibly repeated now
From hill or valley, could not move
Sublimar transport, purer love,
Than doth this silent spectacle—the
gleam—
The shadow—and the peace supreme!

II

No sound is uttered,—but a deep
And solemn harmony pervades
The hollow vale from steep to steep,
And penetrates the glades.
Far-distant images draw nigh,
Called forth by wondrous potency
Of beamy radiance, that imbues,
Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues!
In vision exquisitely clear,
Herds range along the mountain side;
And glistening antlers are descried;
And gilded flocks appear.
Thine is the tranquil hour, purpleal
Eve!
But long as god-like wish, or hope
divine,
Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe
That this magnificence is wholly thine!
—From worlds not quickened by the sun
A portion of the gift is won;
An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is
spread
On ground which British shepherds
tread!

III

And, if there be whom broken ties
Afflict, or injuries assail,
Yon hazy ridges to their eyes
Present a glorious scale,
Climbing suffused with sunny air,
To stop—no record hath told where!
And tempting Fancy to ascend,
And with immortal Spirits blend!
—Wings at my shoulders seem to play;
But, rooted here, I stand and gaze
On those bright steps that heavenward
raise
Their practicable way.
Come forth, ye drooping old men, look
abroad,
And see to what fair countries ye are
bound!

And if some traveller, weary of his road,
Hath slept since noontide on the grassy
ground,
Ye Genii! to his covert speed;
And wake him with such gentle heed
As may attune his soul to meet the
dower
Bestowed on this transcendent hour!

IV

Such hues from their celestial Urn
Were wont to stream before mine eye,
Where'er it wandered in the morn
Of blissful infancy.
This glimpse of glory, why renewed?
Nay, rather speak with gratitude;
For, if a vestige of those gleams
Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.
Dread Power! whom peace and calm
ness serve
No less than Nature's threatening voice,
If aught unworthy be my choice,
From THEE if I would swerve;
Oh, let thy grace remind me of the
light
Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;
Which, at this moment, on my waking
sight
Appears to shine, by miracle restored;
My soul, though yet confined to earth,
Rejoices in a second birth!
—'Tis past, the visionary splendour
fades;
And night approaches with her shades.
1818. 1820.

W. SEPTEMBER, 1819

DEPARTING summer hath assumed
An aspect tenderly illumed,
The gentlest look of spring;
That calls from yonder leafy shade
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,
A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,
Such tribute as to winter chill
The lonely redbreast pays!
Clear, loud, and lively is the din,
From social warblers gathering in
Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer
Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,
And yellow on the bough:—
Fall, rosy garlands, from my head!
Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed
Around a younger brow!

Yet will I temperately rejoice;
Wide is the range, and free the choice
Of undiscordant themes;
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize
Not less than vernal ecstasies,
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,
And they like Demi-gods are strong
On whom the Muses smile;
But some their function have dis-
claimed,
Best pleased with what is aptliest
framed
To enervate and defile.

Not such the initiatory strains
Committed to the silent plains
In Britain's earliest dawn:
Trembled the groves, the stars grew
pale,
While all-too-daringly the veil
Of nature was withdrawn!

Nor such the spirit-stirring note
When the live chords Alcæus smote,
Inflamed by sense of wrong;
Woe! woe to Tyrants! from the lyre
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire
Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page
By wingèd Love inscribed, to assuage
The pangs of vain pursuit;
Love listening while the Lesbian Maid
With finest touch of passion swayed
Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore
The wreck of Herculanean lore,
What rapture! could ye seize
Some Theban fragment, or unroll
One precious, tender-hearted, scroll
Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth
Of poesy; a bursting forth
Of genius from the dust:
What Horace gloried to behold,
What Maro loved, shall we unfold?
Can haughty Time be just!
1819. 1820.

AFTER-THOUGHT

I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my
guide,
As being past away.—Vain sympathies!
For, backward, Duddon, as I cast my
eyes,

I see what was, and is, and will abide;
Still glides the Stream, and shall for
ever glide;
The Form remains, the Function never
dies;
While we, the brave, the mighty, and
the wise,
We Men, who in our morn of youth de-
fied
The elements, must vanish;—be it so!
Enough, if something from our hands
have power
To live, and act, and serve the future
hour;
And if, as toward the silent tomb we
go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's
transcendent dower.
We feel that we are greater than we
know. 1820. 1820.

MUTABILITY

FROM low to high doth dissolution
climb,
And sink from high to low, along a
scale
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not
fail;
A musical but melancholy chime,
Which they can hear who meddle not
with crime,
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
Truth fails not; but her outward forms
that bear
The longest date do melt like frosty
rime,
That in the morning whitened hill and
plain
And is no more; drop like the tower
sublime
Of yesterday, which royally did wear
His crown of weeds, but could not even
sustain
Some casual shout that broke the silent
air,
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.
1821. 1822.

INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL, CAMBRIDGE

TAX not the royal Saint with vain ex-
pense,
With ill-matched aims the Architect
who planned—
Albeit laboring for a scanty band
Of white-robed Scholars only—this im-
mense

And glorious Work of fine intelligence!
 Give all thou canst; high Heaven re-
 jects the lore
 Of nicely-calculated less or more;
 So deemed the man who fashioned for
 the sense
 These lofty pillars, spread that branch-
 ing roof
 Self-poised, and scooped into ten thou-
 sand cells,
 Where light and shade repose, where
 music dwells
 Linger—*and wandering on as loth to*
 die;
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness
 yieldeth proof
 That they were born for immortality.
 1820 or 1821. 1822.

MEMORY

A PEN—to register; a key—
 That winds through secret wards;
 Are well assigned to Memory
 By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given
 A Pencil to her hand;
 That, softening objects, sometimes even
 Outstrips the heart's demand;

That smooths foregone distress, the
 lines
 Of lingering care subdues,
 Long-vanished happiness refines,
 And clothes in brighter hues;

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works
 Those Spectres to dilate
 That startle Conscience, as she lurks
 Within her lonely seat.

Oh! that our lives, which flee so fast,
 In purity were such,
 That not an image of the past
 Should fear that pencil's touch!

Retirement then might hourly look
 Upon a soothing scene,
 Age steal to his allotted nook
 Contented and serene;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,
 In frosty moonlight glistening;
 Or mountain rivers, where they creep
 Along a channel smooth and deep,
 To their own far-off murmurs listening.
 1823. 1827.

W. TO A SKY-LARK

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
 Dost thou despise the earth where cares
 abound?
 Or, while the wings aspire, are heart
 and eye
 Both with thy nest upon the dewy
 ground?
 Thy nest which thou canst drop into at
 will,
 Those quivering wings composed, that
 music still!

Leave to the nightingale her shady
 wood;
 A privacy of glorious light is thine;
 Whence thou dost pour upon the world
 a flood
 Of harmony, with instinct more di-
 vine;
 Type of the wise who soar, but never
 roam;
 True to the kindred points of Heaven
 and Home! 1825. 1827.

SCORN NOT THE SONNET

Composed, almost extempore, in a short walk
 on the western side of Rydal Lake. (*Wordsworth.*)

SCORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have
 frowned,
 Mindless of its just honors; with this
 key
 Shakspeare unlocked his heart; the
 melody
 Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's
 wound;
 A thousand times this pipe did Tasso
 sound;
 With it Camöens soothed an exile's
 grief;
 The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
 Amid the cypress with which Dante
 crowned
 His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp,
 It cheered mild Spenser, called from
 Faeryland
 To struggle through dark ways; and,
 when a damp
 Fell round the path of Milton, in his
 hand
 The Thing became a trumpet; whence
 he blew
 Soul-animating strains—alas, too few!
 1827 ? 1827.

THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK

Written at Rydal Mount. The Rock stands on the right hand a little way leading up the middle road from Rydal to Grasmere. We have been in the habit of calling it the glow-worm rock from the number of glow-worms we have often seen hanging on it as described. The tuft of primrose has, I fear, been washed away by the heavy rains. (*Wordsworth*)

See Dorothy Wordsworth's *Journal*, April 24th, 1802.

A ROCK there is whose homely front
The passing traveller slights;
Yet there the glow-worms hang their
lamps,

Like stars, at various heights;
And one coy Primrose to that Rock
The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,
What kingdoms overthrown,
Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft
And marked it for my own;
A lasting link in Nature's chain
From highest heaven let down!

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,
Their fellowship renew;
The stems are faithful to the root,
That worketh out of view;
And to the rock the root adheres
In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,
Though threatening still to fall;
The earth is constant to her sphere;
And God upholds them all:
So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads
Her annual funeral.

* * * *

Here closed the meditative strain;
But air breathed soft that day,
The hoary mountain-heights were
cheered,

The sunny vale looked gay;
And to the Primrose of the Rock
I gave this after-lay.

I sang—Let myriads of bright flowers,
Like Thee, in field and grove
Revive unenvied;—mightier far,
Than tremblings that reprove
Our vernal tendencies to hope,
Is God's redeeming love;

That love which changed—for wan dis-
ease,

For sorrow that had bent
O'er hopeless dust, for withered age—
Their moral element,
And turned the thistles of a curse
To types beneficent.

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,
The reasoning Sons of Men,
From one oblivious winter called
Shall rise, and breathe again:
And in eternal summer lose
Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends
This prescience from on high,
The faith that elevates the just,
Before and when they die;
And makes each soul a separate heaven,
A court for Deity. 1831. 1835.

YARROW REVISITED

The following Stanzas are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott and other Friends visiting the Banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford, for Naples.

The title *Yarrow Revisited* will stand in no need of explanation for Readers acquainted with the Author's previous poems suggested by that celebrated Stream. (*Wordsworth*.)

THE gallant Youth, who may have
gained,

Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"
Was but an Infant in the lap
When first I looked on Yarrow;
Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate
Long left without a warder,
I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,
Great Minstrel of the Border!

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that
sweet day,

Their dignity installing
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves
Were on the bough, or falling;
But breezes played, and sunshine
gleamed—

The forest to embolden;
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot
Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on
In foamy agitation;
And slept in many a crystal pool
For quiet contemplation:
No public and no private care
The freeborn mind enthralling,
We made a day of happy hours,
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of
youth,

With freaks of graceful folly,—
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,
Her Night not melancholy;
Past, present, future, all appeared
In harmony united,

Like guests that meet, and some from far,
By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods
And down the meadow ranging,
Did meet us with unaltered face,
Though we were changed and changing;

If, *then*, some natural shadows spread
Our inward prospect over,
The soul's deep valley was not slow
Its brightness to recover.

Eternal blessings on the Muse,
And her divine employment!
The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons
For hope and calm enjoyment;
Albeit sickness, lingering yet,
Has o'er their pillow brooded;
And Care waylays their steps—a Sprite
Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT! compelled to change
Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes;
And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot
For mild Sorrento's breezy waves;
May classic Fancy, linking
With native Fancy her fresh aid,
Preserve thy heart from sinking!

Oh! while they minister to thee,
Each vying with the other,
May Health return to mellow Age
With Strength, her venturous brother;
And Tiber, and each brook and rill
Renowned in song and story,
With unimagined beauty shine,
Nor lose one ray of glory!

For Thou, upon a hundred streams,
By tales of love and sorrow
Of faithful love, undaunted truth,
Hast shed the power of Yarrow;
And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,
Wherever they invite Thee,
At parent Nature's grateful call,
With gladness must requite Thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,
Such looks of love and honor
As thy own Yarrow gave to me
When first I gazed upon her;
Beheld what I had feared to see,
Unwilling to surrender
Dreams treasured up from early days,
The holy and the tender.

And what, for this frail world, were all
That mortals do or suffer,

Did no responsive harp, no pen,
Memorial tribute offer?
Yea, what were mighty Nature's self?
Her features, could they win us,
Unhelped by the poetic voice
That hourly speaks within us?

Nor deem that localized Romance
Plays false with our affections;
Unsanctifies our tears—made sport
For fanciful dejections:
Ah, no! the visions of the past
Sustain the heart in feeling
Life as she is—our changeful Life,
With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day
In Yarrow's groves were centred;
Who through the silent portal arch
Of mouldering Newark entered;
And clomb the winding stair that once
Too timidly was mounted
By the "last Minstrel," (not the last!)
Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream!
Fulfil thy pensive duty,
Well pleased that future Bards should chant
For simple hearts thy beauty;
To dream-light dear while yet unseen,
Dear to the common sunshine,
And dearer still, as now I feel,
To memory's shadowy moonshine!
1831. 1835.

THE TROSACHS

As recorded in my sister's Journal, I had first seen the Trosachs in her and Coleridge's company. The sentiment that runs through this Sonnet was natural to the season in which I again saw this beautiful spot; but this and some other sonnets that follow were colored by the remembrance of my recent visit to Sir Walter Scott, and the melancholy errand on which he was going. (*Wordsworth*.)

THERE'S not a nook within this solemn Pass,
But were an apt confessional for One
Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,
That Life is but a tale of morning grass
Withered at eve. From scenes of art
which chase
That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes
Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than glass

Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice
happy quest,
If from a golden perch of aspen spray
(October's workmanship to rival May)
The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught
lay,
Lulling the year, with all its cares, to
rest! 1831. 1835.

IF THOU INDEED DERIVE THY LIGHT FROM HEAVEN

If thou indeed derive thy light from
Heaven,
Then, to the measure of that heaven-
born light,
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content:
The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,
And they that from the zenith dart their
beams,
(Visible though they be to half the earth,
Though half a sphere be conscious of
their brightness)
Are yet of no diviner origin,
No purer essence, than the one that
burns,
Like an untended watch-fire on the ridge
Of some dark mountain; or than those
which seem
Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter
lamps,
Among the branches of the leafless trees.
All are the undying offspring of one Sire:
Then, to the measure of the light vouch-
safed,
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be con-
tent. 1832. 1836.

IF THIS GREAT WORLD OF JOY AND PAIN

If this great world of joy and pain
Revolve in one sure track;
If freedom, set, will rise again,
And virtue, flown, come back;
Woe to the purblind crew who fill
The heart with each day's care;
Nor gain, from past or future, skill
To bear, and to forbear!
1833. 1835.

"THERE!" SAID A STRIPLING, POINTING WITH MEET PRIDE

"THERE!" said a Stripling, pointing
with meet pride
Towards a low roof with green trees
half concealed,

"Is Mosgiel Farm; and that's the very
field
Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy."
Far and wide
A plain below stretched seaward, while,
descried
Above sea-clouds, the Peaks of Arran
rose;
And, by that simple notice, the repose
Of earth, sky, sea and air, was vivified.
Beneath "the random *field* of clod or
stone"
Myriads of daisies have shone forth in
flower
Near the lark's nest, and in their natural
hour
Have passed away; less happy than the
One
That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died
to prove
The tender charm of poetry and love.
1833. 1835.

MOST SWEET IT IS WITH UN- UPLIFTED EYES

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
To pace the ground, if path be there or
none,
While a fair region round the traveller
lies
Which he forbears again to look upon;
Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,
The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
Of meditation, slipping in between
The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
If Thought and Love desert us, from that
day
Let us break off all commerce with the
Muse:
With Thought and Love companions of
our way,
Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,
The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her
dews
Of inspiration on the humblest lay.
1833. 1835.

W.

EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG¹

WHEN first, descending from the moor-
lands,
I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide

¹ Walter Scott died Sept. 21, 1832
S. T. Coleridge " July 25, 1834
Charles Lamb " Dec. 27, 1834
Geo. Crabbe " Feb. 3, 1832
Felicja Remans " May 16, 1834

Along a bare and open valley,
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered
Through groves that had begun to shed
Their golden leaves upon the pathways,
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,
'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies;
And death upon the braes of Yarrow,
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes:

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,
From sign to sign, its steadfast course,
Since every mortal power of Coleridge
Was frozen at its marvellous source;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in
earth:

And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Like clouds that rake the mountain-
summits,

Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast has brother followed brother
From sunshine to the sunless land!

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber
Were earlier raised, remain to hear
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,
"Who next will drop and disappear?"

Our haughty life is crowned with dark-
ness,

Like London with its own black wreath,
On which with thee, O Crabbe! forth-
looking,

I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,
Thou too art gone before; but why,
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,
Should frail survivors heave a sigh?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep;
For Her who, ere her summer faded,
Has sunk into a breathless sleep.

No more of old romantic sorrows,
For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn
Maid!

With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet
dead. Nov. 1835 Dec. 1835.

A POET!—HE HATH PUT HIS HEART TO SCHOOL

A Poet!—He hath put his heart to
school,
Nor dares to move unpropped upon the
staff

Which Art hath lodged within his hand
—must laugh

By precept only, and shed tears by rule.
Thy Art be Nature; the live current
quaff,

And let the groveller sip his stagnant
pool,

In fear that else, when Critics grave and
cool

Have killed him, Scorn should write his
epitaph.

How does the Meadow-flower its bloom
unfold?

Because the lovely little flower is free
Down to its root, and, in that freedom,
bold;

And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree
Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
But from its own divine vitality.

1842? 1842.

SO FAIR, SO SWEET, WITHAL SO SENSITIVE

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,
Would that the little Flowers were born
to live,

Conscious of half the pleasure which
they give;

That to this mountain-daisy's self were
known

The beauty of its star-shaped shadow,
thrown

On the smooth surface of this naked
stone!

And what if hence a bold desire should
mount

High as the Sun, that he could take
account

Of all that issues from his glorious
fount!

So might he ken how by his sovereign
aid

These delicate companionships are
made;

And how he rules the pomp of light
and shade;

And were the Sister-power that shines
by night
So privileged, what a countenance of
delight
Would through the clouds break forth
on human sight!

Fond fancies! wheresoe'er shall turn
thine eye
On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky,
Converse with Nature in pure sympathy;

All vain desires, all lawless wishes
quelled,
Be Thou to love and praise alike im-
pelled
Whatever boon is granted or withheld.
1844. 1845.

W. THE UNREMITTING VOICE OF
NIGHTLY STREAMS

THE unrelmitting voice of nightly
streams
That wastes so oft, we think, its tune-
ful powers,
If neither soothing to the worm that
gleams
Through dewy grass, nor small birds
hushed in bowers,
Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy
flowers,—
That voice of unpretending harmony
(For who what is shall measure by what
seems
To be, or not to be,
Or tax high Heaven with prodigality?)
Wants not a healing influence that can
creep

Into the human breast, and mix with
sleep
To regulate the motion of our dreams
For kindly issues—as through every
chime
Was felt near murmuring brooks in
earliest time;
As at this day, the rudest swains who
dwell
Where torrents roar, or hear the tink-
ling knell
Of water-breaks, with grateful heart
could tell. 1846. 1850.

SONNET

TO AN OCTOGENARIAN

AFFECTIONS lose their object; Time
brings forth
No successors; and, lodged in memory,
If love exist no longer, it must die,—
Wanting accustomed food, must pass
from earth,
Or never hope to reach a second birth.
This sad belief, the happiest that is left
To thousands, share not Thou; howe'er
bereft,
Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a
dearth.
Though poor and destitute of friends
thou art,
Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race,
One to whom Heaven assigns that
mournful part
The utmost solitude of age to face,
Still shall be left some corner of the
heart
Where Love for living Thing can find a
place. 1846. 1850.

COLERIDGE

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COLERIDGE

LIFE

As late I journey'd o'er the extensive
plain
Where native Otter sports his scanty
stream,
Musing in torpid woe a sister's pain,
The glorious prospect woke me from
the dream.

At every step it widen'd to my sight,
Wood, Meadow, verdant Hill, and dreary
Steep,
Following in quick succession of delight,
Till all—at once—did my eye ravish'd
sweep!

May this (I cried) my course through
Life portray!
New scenes of wisdom may each step
display,
And knowledge open as my days ad-
vance!
Till what time Death shall pour the un-
darken'd ray,
My eye shall dart thro' infinite ex-
panse,
And thought suspended lie in rapture's
blissful trance.

September, 1789. 1834.¹

LINES

ON AN AUTUMNAL EVENING

O THOU wild Fancy, check thy wing!
No more
Those thin white flakes, those purple
clouds explore!
Nor there with happy spirits speed thy
flight

¹ The dates for Coleridge's poems are made up from the Shepherd-Prideaux and the Haney bibliographies, and from the excellent notes to Campbell's edition of the Poetical Works.

Bathed in rich amber-glowing floods of
light;
Nor in yon gleam, where slow descends
the day,
With western peasants hail the morning
ray!
Ah! rather bid the perished pleasures
move,
A shadowy train, across the soul of
Love!
O'er disappointment's wintry desert fling
Each flower that wreathed the dewy
locks of Spring,
When blushing, like a bride, from Hope's
trim bower
She leapt, awakened by the pattering
shower.
Now sheds the sinking Sun a deeper
gleam,
Aid, lovely Sorceress! aid thy Poet's
dream!
With faery wand O bid the Maid arise,
Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-
blue eyes;
As erst when from the Muses' calm
abode
I came, with Learning's meed not un-
bestowed:
When as she twined a laurel round my
brow,
And met my kiss, and half returned my
vow,
O'er all my frame shot rapid my thrilled
heart,
And every nerve confessed the electric
dart.

O dear Deceit! I see the Maiden rise,
Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-
blue eyes!
When first the lark high-soaring swells
his throat,
Mocks the tired eye, and scatters the
loud note,
I trace her footsteps on the accustomed
lawn,

I mark her glancing mid the gleams of dawn.

When the bent flower beneath the night-dew weeps

And on the lake the silver lustre sleeps,
Amid the paly radiance soft and sad,
She meets my lonely path in moonbeams clad.

With her along the streamlet's brink I rove ;

With her I list the warblings of the grove ;

And seems in each low wind her voice to float

Lone whispering Pity in each soothing note !

Spirits of Love ! ye heard her name !
Obey

The powerful spell, and to my haunt repair.

Whether on clustering pinions ye are there,

Where rich snows blossom on the Myrtle-trees,

Or with fond languishment around my fair

Sigh in the loose luxuriance of her hair ;

O heed the spell, and hither wing your way,

Like far-off music, voyaging the breeze !

Spirits ! to you the infant Maid was given

Formed by the wondrous Alchemy of Heaven !

No fairer Maid does Love's wide empire know,

No fairer Maid e'er heaved the bosom's snow.

A thousand Loves around her forehead fly ;

A thousand Loves sit melting in her eye ;
Love lights her smile—in Joy's red nectar dips

His myrtle flower, and plants it on her lips.

She speaks ! and hark that passion-warbled song—

Still, Fancy ! still that voice, those notes, prolong,

As sweet as when that voice with rapturous falls

Shall wake the softened echoes of Heaven's Halls !

O (have I sigh'd) were mine the wizard's rod,

Or mine the power of Proteus, changeful God !¹

A flower-entangled Arbor I would seem
To shield my Love from Noontide's sultry beam :

Or bloom a Myrtle, from whose odorous boughs

My Love might weave gay garlands for her brows.

When Twilight stole across the fading vale,

To fan my Love I'd be the Evening Gale ;

Mourn in the soft folds of her swelling vest,

And flutter my faint pinions on her breast !

On Seraph wing I'd float a Dream by night,

To soothe my Love with shadows of delight :—

Or soar aloft to be the Spangled Skies,
And gaze upon her with a thousand eyes !

As when the Savage, who his drowsy frame

Had basked beneath the Sun's unclouded flame,

Awakes amid the troubles of the air,
The skiey deluge, and white lightning's glare—

Aghast he scours before the tempest's sweep,

And sad recalls the sunny hour of sleep :—

So tossed by storms along Life's wildering way,

Mine eye reverted views that cloudless day,

When by my native brook I wont to rove,

While Hope with kisses nursed the Infant Love.

Dear native brook ! like Peace, so placidly

Smoothing through fertile fields thy current meek !

Dear native brook ! where first young Poesy

Stared wildly-eager in her noontide dream !

Where blameless pleasures dimple Quiet's cheek,

¹ I entreat the Public's pardon for having carelessly suffered to be printed such intolerable stuff as this and the thirteen following lines. They have not the merit even of originality : as every thought is to be found in the Greek Epigrams

(From Coleridge's note in the *Poems*, 1796.)

As water-lilies ripple thy slow stream !
 Dear native haunts ! where Virtue still
 is gay,
 Where Friendship's fixed star sheds a
 mellowed ray,
 Where Love a crown of thornless Roses
 wears,
 Where soften'd Sorrow smiles within her
 tears ;
 And Memory, with a Vestal's chaste
 employ,
 Unceasing feeds the lambent flame of
 joy !
 No more your sky-larks melting from the
 sight
 Shall thrill the attuned heart-string with
 delight—
 No more shall deck your pensive Pleas-
 ures sweet
 With wreaths of sober hue my evening
 seat.
 Yet dear to Fancy's eye your varied
 scene
 Of wood, hill, dale, and sparkling brook
 between !
 Yet sweet to Fancy's ear the warbled
 song,
 That soars on Morning's wing your vales
 among.

Scenes of my Hope ! the aching eye ye
 leave
 Like yon bright hues that paint the
 clouds of eve !
 Tearful and saddening with the saddened
 blaze
 Mine eye the gleam pursues with wistful
 gaze :
 Sees shades on shades with deeper tint
 impend,
 Till chill and damp the moonless night
 descend. 1793. 1796.

LEWTI

OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHANT

At midnight by the stream I roved,
 To forget the form I loved.
 Image of Lewti ! from my mind
 Depart ; for Lewti is not kind.

The Moon was high, the moonlight
 gleam
 And the shadow of a star
 Heaved upon Tamaha's stream ;
 But the rock shone brighter far,
 The rock half sheltered from my view
 By pendent boughs of tressy yew.—

So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,
 Gleaming through her sable hair,
 Image of Lewti ! from my mind
 Depart ; for Lewti is not kind.

I saw a cloud of palest hue,
 Onward to the moon it passed ;
 Still brighter and more bright it grew,
 With floating colors not a few,
 Till it reach'd the moon at last :
 Then the cloud was wholly bright,
 With a rich and amber light !
 And so with many a hope I seek
 And with such joy I find my Lewti ;
 And even so my pale wan cheek
 Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty !
 Nay, treacherous image ! leave my
 mind,
 If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,
 Away it goes ; away so soon ?
 Alas ! it has no power to stay :
 Its hues are dim, its hues are gray
 Away it passes from the moon !
 How mournfully it seems to fly,
 Ever fading more and more,
 To joyless regions of the sky—
 And now 'tis whiter than before !
 As white as my poor cheek will be,
 When, Lewti ! on my couch I lie,
 A dying man for love of thee.
 Nay, treacherous image ! leave my
 mind—
 And yet, thou didst not look unkind.

I saw a vapor in the sky.
 Thin, and white, and very high ;
 I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud :
 Perhaps the breezes that can fly
 Now below and now above,
 Have snatched aloft the lawny shroud
 Of Lady fair—that died for love.
 For maids, as well as youths, have
 perished
 From fruitless love too fondly cherished.
 Nay, treacherous image ! leave my
 mind—
 For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush ! my heedless feet from under
 Slip the crumbling banks for ever :
 Like echoes to a distant thunder,
 They plunge into the gentle river.
 The river-swans have heard my tread,
 And startle from their reedy bed.
 O beauteous birds ! methinks ye measure
 Your movements to some heavenly
 tune !

O beauteous birds ! 'tis such a pleasure
To see you move beneath the moon,
I would it were your true delight
To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies
When silent night has closed her eyes :
It is a breezy jasmine-bower,
The nightingale sings o'er her head :
Voice of the Night ! had I the power
That leafy labyrinth to thread,
And creep, like thee, with soundless
tread,
I then might view her bosom white
Heaving lovely to my sight,
As these two swans together heave
On the gently-swelling wave.

Oh ! that she saw me in a dream,
And dreamt that I had died for care ;
All pale and wasted I would seem
Yet fair withal, as spirits are !
I'd die indeed, if I might see
Her bosom heave, and heave for me !
Soothe, gentle image ! soothe my mind !
To-morrow Lewti may be kind.
1794. April 13, 1798.

LA FAYETTE

As when far off the warbled strains are
heard
That soar on Morning's wing the vales
among ;
Within his cage the imprisoned matin
bird
Swell the full chorus with a generous
song :

He bathes no pinion in the dewy light,
No Father's joy, no Lover's bliss he
shares,

Yet still the rising radiance cheers
his sight—
His fellows' freedom soothes the cap-
tive's cares !

Thou, FAYETTE ! who didst wake with
startling voice
Life's better sun from that long win-
try night,

Thus in thy Country's triumphs shalt
rejoice
And mock with raptures high the dun-
geon's might :

For lo ! the morning struggles into day,
And Slavery's spectres shriek and van-
ish from the ray !

1794. December 15, 1794.

REFLECTIONS ON HAVING LEFT
A PLACE OF RETIREMENT

Señonon proproria.—HOR.

Low was our pretty Cot : our tallest rose
Peeped at the chamber-window. We
could hear

At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
The sea's faint murmur. In the open
air

Our myrtles blossom'd ; and across the
porch

Thick jasmines twined : the little land-
scape round

Was green and woody, and refreshed
the eye.

It was a spot which you might aptly
call

The Valley of Seclusion ! Once I saw
(Hallowing his Sabbath-day by quietness)
A wealthy son of commerce saunter by,
Bristow's citizen : methought, it calmed
His thirst of idle gold, and made him
muse

With wiser feelings : for he paused, and
looked

With a pleased sadness, and gazed all
around,

Then eyed our Cottage, and gazed round
again,

And sighed, and said, it was a Blessed
Place.

And we were blessed. Oft with patient
ear

Long-listening to the viewless sky-lark's
note

(Viewless, or haply for a moment seen
Gleaming on sunny wings) in whispered
tones

I've said to my beloved, "Such, sweet
girl !

The inobtrusive song of Happiness,
Unearthly minstrelsy ! then only heard
When the soul seeks to hear ; when all
is hushed,

And the heart listens !"

But the time, when first
From that low dell, steep up the stony
mount

I climbed with perilous toil and reached
the top,

Oh ! what a goodly scene ! Here the
bleak mount,

The bare bleak mountain speckled thin
with sheep ;

Gray clouds, that shadowing spot the
sunny fields ;

And river, now with bushy rocks o'er
browed,

Now winding bright and full, with naked
banks ;
And seats, and lawns, the abbey and the
wood,
And cots, and hamlets, and faint city-
spire ;
The Channel *there*, the Islands and white
sails,
Dim coasts, and cloud-like hills and
shoreless Ocean—
It seem'd like Omnipresence ! God, me-
thought,
Had built him there a Temple : the
whole World
Seemed imaged in its vast circumfer-
ence :
No *wish* profaned my overwhelmed heart.
Blest hour ! It was a luxury,—to be !

Ah ! quiet dell ! dear cot, and mount
sublime !
I was constrained to quit you. Was it
right,
While my unnumbered brethren toiled
and bled,
That I should dream away the entrusted
hours
On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward
heart
With feelings all too delicate for use ?
Sweet is the tear that from some How-
ard's eye
Drops on the cheek of one he lifts from
earth :
And he that works me good with un-
moved face,
Does it but half : he chills me while he
aids,
My benefactor, not my brother man !
Yet even this, this cold beneficence
Praise, praise it, O my Soul ! oft as thou
scann'st
The sluggard *Pity's* vision-weaving tribe !
Who sigh for wretchedness, yet shun
the wretched,
Nursing in some delicious solitude
Their slothful loves and dainty sym-
pathies !
I therefore go, and join head, heart, and
hand,
Active and firm, to fight the bloodless
fight
Of science, freedom, and the truth in
Christ.

Yet oft when after honorable toil
Rests the tired mind, and waking loves
to dream,
My spirit shall revisit thee, dear Cot !

Thy jasmine and thy window-peeping
rose,
And myrtles fearless of the mild sea-air.
And I shall sigh fond wishes—sweet
abode !
Ah !—had none greater ! And that all
had such !
It might be so—but the time is not yet.
Speed it, O Father ! Let thy Kingdom
come ! 1795. October, 1796.

TIME REAL AND IMAGINARY

AN ALLEGORY

ON the wide level of a mountain's head,
(I knew not where, but 'twas some
faery place)
Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails out-
spread,
Two lovely children run an endless race,
A sister and a brother !
This far outstript the other ;
Yet ever runs she with reverted face,
And looks and listens for the boy be-
hind :
For he, alas ! is blind !
O'er rough and smooth with even step he
passed,
And knows not whether he be first or
last. 1817.

THIS LIME-TREE BOWER MY PRISON

ADDRESSED TO CHARLES LAMB, OF THE
INDIA HOUSE, LONDON

In the June of 1797 some long-expected friends
paid a visit to the author's cottage ; and on the
morning of their arrival, he met with an acci-
dent, which disabled him from walking during
the whole time of their stay. One evening,
when they had left him for a few hours, he
composed the following lines in the garden-
bower. (Coleridge.)

WELL, they are gone, and here must I
remain,
This lime-tree bower my prison ! I have
lost
Beauties and feelings, such as would
have been
Most sweet to my remembrance even
when age

¹Included by Coleridge among his " Juvenile
Poems." There is no other evidence to indicate
at what date it was written. See, however, a man-
uscript note of 1811 on the same subject, given
in *Anima Poetæ* at the beginning of Chapter
VIII.

Had dimmed mine eyes to blindness!
 They, meanwhile,
 Friends, whom I never more may meet
 again,
 On springy heath, along the hill-top
 edge,
 Wander in gladness, and wind down,
 perchance,
 To that still roaring dell, of which I told;
 The roaring dell, o'erwooded, narrow,
 deep,
 And only speckled by the mid-day sun;
 Where its slim trunk the ash from rock
 to rock
 Flings arching like a bridge;—that
 branchless ash,
 Unsunned and damp, whose few poor
 yellow leaves
 Ne'er tremble in the gale, yet tremble
 still,
 Fanned by the water-fall! and there my
 friends
 Behold the dark green file of long lank
 weeds,
 That all at once (a most fantastic sight!)
 Still nod and drip beneath the dripping
 edge
 Of the blue clay-stone.

Now, my friends emerge
 Beneath the wide wide Heaven—and
 view again
 The many steeped tract magnificent
 Of hilly fields and meadows, and the
 sea,
 With some fair bark, perhaps, whose
 sails light up
 The slip of smooth clear blue betwixt
 two Isles
 Of purple shadow! Yes! they wander
 on
 In gladness all; but thou, methinks,
 most glad,
 My gentle-hearted Charles! for thou hast
 pined
 And hungered after Nature, many a
 year,
 In the great City pent, winning thy way
 With sad yet patient soul, through evil
 and pain
 And strange calamity! Ah! slowly sink
 Behind the western ridge, thou glorious
 Sun!
 Shine in the slant beams of the sinking
 orb,
 Ye purple heath-flowers! richlier burn,
 ye clouds!
 Live in the yellow light, ye distant
 groves!

And kindle, thou blue Ocean! So my
 friend
 Struck with deep joy may stand, as I
 have stood,
 Silent with swimming sense; yea, gazing
 round
 On the wide landscape, gaze till all doth
 seem
 Less gross than bodily; and of such
 hues
 As veil the Almighty Spirit, when yet
 he makes
 Spirits perceive his presence.

A delight
 Comes sudden on my heart, and I am
 glad
 As I myself were there! Nor in this
 bower,
 This little lime-tree bower, have I not
 marked
 Much that has soothed me. Pale beneath
 the blaze
 Hung the transparent foliage; and I
 watched
 Some broad and sunny leaf, and loved to
 see
 The shadow of the leaf and stem above,
 Dappling its sunshine! And that wal-
 nut-tree
 Was richly tinged, and a deep radiance
 lay
 Full on the ancient ivy, which usurps
 Those fronting elms, and now, with
 blackest mass
 Makes their dark branches gleam a lighter
 hue
 Through the late twilight: and though
 now the bat
 Wheels silent by, and not a swallow
 twitters,
 Yet still the solitary humble-bee
 Sings in the bean-flower! Henceforth I
 shall know
 That Nature ne'er deserts the wise and
 pure;
 No plot so narrow, be but Nature there.
 No waste so vacant, but may well
 employ
 Each faculty of sense, and keep the
 heart
 Awake to Love and Beauty! and some-
 times
 'Tis well to be bereft of promised good,
 That we may lift the soul, and contem-
 plate
 With lively joy the joys we cannot
 share,
 My gentle-hearted Charles! when the
 last rock

Beat its straight path along the dusky
air
Homewards, I blest it! deeming, its
black wing
(Now a dim speck, now vanishing in
light)
Had cross'd the mighty orb's dilated
glory,
While thou stood'st gazing; or when all
was still,
Flew creaking o'er thy head, and had a
charm
For thee, my gentle-hearted Charles, to
whom
No sound is dissonant which tells of
Life. 1797. 1800.

KUBLA KHAN

In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farmhouse between Porlock and Linton, on the Ex-moor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in Purchas's "Pilgrimage": "Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." The Author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence, that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as *things*, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away, like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone has been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter.

Then all the charm
Is broken—all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shapes the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth! who scarcely dar'st lift up thine
eyes—

The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return! And lo, he stays,
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once
more

The pool becomes a mirror.

(From *The Picture; or, the Lover's Resolution*)

Yet from the still surviving recollections in his

mind, the Author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, given to him. *Αἰπὸν ἄδιον ἄσω*, but the to-morrow is yet to come. (Coleridge's note, 1816.)

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled
round:
And here were gardens bright with
sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing
tree;
And here were forests ancient as the
hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.
But oh! that deep romantic chasm
which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn
cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was
haunted!
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasin, with ceaseless
turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were
breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was
forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding
hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's
flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once
and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy
motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river
ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to
man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from
far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled
measure

From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
 In a vision once I saw :
 It was an Abyssinian maid,
 And on her dulcimer she played,
 Singing of Mount Abora.
 Could I revive within me
 Her symphony and song,
 To such a deep delight 'twould win
 me,
 That with music loud and long,
 I would build that dome in air,
 That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !
 And all who heard should see them
 there,
 And all should cry, Beware ! Beware !
 His flashing eyes, his floating hair !
 Weave a circle round him thrice,
 And close your eyes with holy dread,
 For he on honey-dew hath fed,
 And drunk the milk of Paradise.

1797. 1816.

SONG FROM OSORIO

HEAR, sweet spirit, hear the spell,
 Lest a blacker charm compel !
 So shall the midnight breezes swell
 With thy deep long-linging knell.

And at evening evermore,
 In a Chapel on the shore,
 Shall the Chaunters sad and saintly,
 Yellow tapers burning faintly,
 Doleful Masses chaunt for thee,
Miserere Domine !

Hark ! the cadence dies away
 On the quiet moonlight sea :
 The boatmen rest their oars and say,
Miserere Domine ! 1797. 1813.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT
MARINER¹

IN SEVEN PARTS

Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles
 quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum
 omnium familiaris quis nobis enarrabit ? et gra-
 dus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum
 munera ? Quid agunt ? quæ loca habitant ?
 Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium
 humanum, nunquam attigit. Juvat, interea,
 non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in
 tabulâ, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem
 contemplari : ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ
 minutis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsidat in

¹ The poem is here given in the text of 1829
 which is Coleridge's final version, the result of
 several revisions, most of which are improve-
 ments over the first text of 1798. Instead of the

pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus. T. BURNET *Archæol. Phil.* p. 68.

ARGUMENT¹

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven
 by storms to the cold Country towards the South
 Pole ; and how from thence she made her course
 to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific
 Ocean ; and of the strange things that befell ;
 and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came
 back to his own Country.

PART I

² It is an ancient Mariner,
 And he stoppeth one of three.
 " By thy long gray beard and glittering
 eye,
 Now wherefore stopp'st thou me ?

The Bridegroom's doors are opened
 wide,
 And I am next of kin ;
 The guests are met, the feast is set ;
 May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
 " There was a ship," quoth he.
 " Hold off ! unhand me, gray-beard
 loon !"
 Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

³ He holds him with his glittering eye—
 The Wedding-Guest stood still,
 And listens like a three years' child :
 The Mariner hath his will.

third stanza, for instance, the original text has
 the two following :

But still he holds the wedding-guest—
 " There was a Ship," quoth he—
 " Nay, if thou'st got a laughsome tale,
 Marinere ! come with me."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
 Quoth he, " There was a Ship—"
 " Now get thee hence, thou gray-beard Loon !
 Or my Staff shall make thee skip."

For a full study of the different texts, see
 Prof. F. H. Sykes' *Select Poems of Coleridge*
 and Wordsworth, edited from Authors' Editions,
 Toronto, 1899. On the origin of the poem, see
Biographia Literaria, Chap. XIV, and Words-
 worth's account of it, quoted and discussed in
 H. D. Traill's *Life of Coleridge*, pp. 47-50.

¹ In the editions of 1798 and 1800 only.

² An ancient Mariner meeteth three Gallants
 bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.
 [This and the following notes, except those in
 brackets, are Coleridge's running Summary of
 the story, first printed in *Sybiline Leaves*, 1817.]

³ The Wedding-Guest is spell-bound by the
 eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained
 to hear his tale.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone :
He cannot choose but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

'The ship was cheered, the harbor
cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

¹ The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he !
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—"
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

² The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she ;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

³ "And now the Storm-blast came, and
he
Was tyrannous and strong :
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the
blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and
snow,
And it grew wondrous cold :
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

¹ The Mariner tells how the ship sailed south-
ward with a good wind and fair weather, till it
reached the line.

² The Wedding Guest heareth the bridal
music ; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

³ The ship drawn by a storm toward the south
pole.

⁴ The land of ice, and of fearful sounds, where
no living thing was to be seen.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen :
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around :
It cracked and growled, and roared and
howled,
Like voices in a swoond !

¹ At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came ;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit ;
The helmsman steered us through !

² And a good south wind sprung up be-
hind ;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariner's hollo !

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine ;
While all the night, through fog-smoke
white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

³ "God save thee, ancient Mariner !
From the fiends, that plague thee
thus !—
Why look'st thou so ?" —" With my
cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

PART II

"The Sun now rose upon the right :
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew be-
hind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo !

¹ Till a great sea bird, called the Albatross,
came through the snow-fog, and was received
with great joy and hospitality.

² And lo ! the Albatross proveth a bird of good
omen, and followeth the ship as it returned
northward through fog and floating ice.

³ The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the
pious bird of good omen.

¹ And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird,
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

² Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
³ 'Twas right, said they, such birds to
slay,
That bring the fog and mist.

³ The fair breeze blew, the white foam
flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

⁴ Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt
down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

⁵ Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.

¹ His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

² But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

³ The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.

⁴ The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

⁵ And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

¹ And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter
drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

² Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III

"There passed a weary time. Each
throat

Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye!—

³ When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared;
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

⁴ With throats unslaked, with black lips
baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we
stood!

I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips
baked,
Agape they heard me call:

¹ A Spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

² The shipmates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner; in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

³ The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

⁴ At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

¹ Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

² 'See ! see !' (I cried) 'she tacks no
more !

Hither to work us weal,
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel !'

The western wave was all aflame.
The day was well-nigh done !
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun ;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

³ And straight the Sun was flecked with
bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace !)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

Alas ! (thought I, and my heart beat
loud)
How fast she nears and nears !
Are those her sails that glance in the
Sun,
Like restless gossameres ?

⁴ Are those her ribs though which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate ?
And is that Woman all her crew ?
Is that a Death ? and are there two ?
⁵ Is Death that woman's mate ?

⁶ Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold :
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

⁷ The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice ;
'The game is done ! I've won ! I've won !'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

¹ A flash of joy.

² And horror follows. For can it be a ship that
comes onward without wind or tide ?

³ It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

⁴ And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of
the setting Sun.

⁵ The Spectre-Woman and her Death-mate,
and no other on board the skeleton-ship.

⁶ Like vessel, like crew !

⁷ Death and Life-in-Death have dined for the
ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the
ancient Mariner.

¹ The Sun's rim dips ; the stars rush out.
At one stride comes the dark ;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

² We listened and looked sideways up !
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip !
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp
gleamed white ;

From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

³ One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly
pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

⁴ Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

⁵ The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe !
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow !"—

PART IV

⁶ "I fear thee, ancient Mariner !
I fear thy skinny hand
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand."⁷

I fear thee and thy glittering eye.
And thy skinny hand, so brown."

⁸ "Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-
Guest !
This body dropt not down.

¹ No twilight within the courts of the Sun

² At the rising of the Moon,

³ One after another

⁴ His shipmates drop down dead.

⁵ But Life-in-Death begins her work on the
ancient Mariner.

⁶ The Wedding-Guest feareth that a Spirit is
talking to him.

⁷ [For the last two lines of this stanza, I am
indebted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a deligh-
tful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with
him and his sister, in the autumn of 1797, that
this poem was planned, and in part composed.
(Note of Coleridge, first printed in *Sibylline
Leaves*, 1817)]

⁸ But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his
bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible
penance.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

¹ The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

² I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and
the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

³ The cold sweat melted from their
limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is a curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that
curse,
And yet I could not die.

⁴ The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

¹ He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

² And envieth that they should live, and so
many lie dead.

³ But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the
dead men.

⁴ In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth to-
wards the journeying Moon, and the stars that
still sojourn, yet still move onward; and every-
where the blue sky belongs to them, and is their
appointed rest, and their native country and
their own natural homes, which they enter un-
announced, as lords that are certainly expected,
and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

¹ Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

² O happy livings things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart
³ And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

⁴ The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V

“ Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

⁵ The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

¹ By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's
creatures of the great calm.

² Their beauty and their happiness.

³ He blesseth them in his heart.

⁴ The spell begins to break.

⁵ By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient
Mariner is refreshed with rain.

‘And soon I heard a roaring wind :
It did not come anear :
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life !
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
To and fro they were hurried about !
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more
loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge ;
And the rain poured down from one
black cloud ;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side :
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

‘The loud wind never reached the
ship,
Yet now the ship moved on !
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all up-
rose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved
on ;
Yet never a breeze up blew ;
The mariners all ‘gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do ;
They raised their limbs like lifeless
tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother’s son
Stood by me, knee to knee :
The body and I pulled at one rope
But he said nought to me.”—

3 “I fear thee, ancient Mariner !”—
“Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest !

¹ He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights
and commotions in the sky and the element.

² The bodies of the ship’s crew are inspired,
and the ship moves on ;

³ But not by the souls of the men, nor by
demons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed
troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invo-
cation of the guardian saint.

‘Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corpses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest :

For when it dawned—they dropped their
arms,
And clustered round the mast ;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their
mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun ;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing ;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning !

And now ‘twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute ;
And now it is an angel’s song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe :
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

¹ Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid : and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean :
But in a minute she ‘gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length !
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound :
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

¹ The lonesome Spirit from the south-pole
carries on the ship as far as the Line, in obedi-
ence to the angelic troop, but still requireth
vengeance.

¹How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance
done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI

FIRST VOICE

"But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?"

SECOND VOICE

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

FIRST VOICE

²'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

SECOND VOICE

'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

¹The Polar Spirit's fellow-demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

²The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

¹I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the Moon was
high,
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they
died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

²And now this spell was snapt: once
more
I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks
on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

³Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

¹The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

²The curse is finally expiated.

³And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

We drifted o'er the barbor-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
'O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.'

The harbor-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colors came.

² A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

¹ The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,

² And appear in their own forms of light.

PART VII

¹ "This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with mariners
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them
talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and
fair,
That signal made but now?'

² 'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit
said—
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks look warped! and see those
sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look'—
(The Pilot made reply)
'I am a-feared.'—'Push on, push on!'
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

³ Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

⁴ Stunned by that loud and dreadful
sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,

¹ The Hermit of the Wood,

² Approacheth the ship with wonder.

³ The ship suddenly sinketh.

⁴ The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

Like one that hath been seven days
drowned
My body lay afloat ;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round ;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit ;
The Holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars : The Pilot's boy
Who now doth crazy go
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha ! ha !' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land !
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man !'
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou ?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was
wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale ;
And then it left me free.

² Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns :
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land ;
I have strange power of speech ;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me :
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door !
The wedding-guests are there :
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are :
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer !

¹ The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him ; and the penance of life falls on him.

² And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land.

O Wedding-Guest ! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea :
So lonely, 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk,
With a goodly company !—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray.
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends
And youths and maidens gay !

'Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small ;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone ; and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been
stunned,
And is of sense forlorn :
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

1797-1798. 1798.

W. CHRISTABEL

The first part of the following poem was written in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, at Stowey, in the county of Somerset. The second part, after my return from Germany, in the year one thousand eight hundred, at Keswick, Cumberland. Since the latter date, my poetic powers have been, till very lately, in a state of suspended animation. But as, in my very first conception of the tale, I had the whole present to my mind, with the wholeness, no less than with the liveliness of a vision ; I trust that I shall be able to embody in verse the three parts yet to come, in the course of the present year. . . .

I have only to add, that the metre of the Christabel is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its being founded on a new principle: namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found

¹ And to teach, by his own example, love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

to be only four. Nevertheless this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition in the nature of the imagery or passion. (From Coleridge's *Preface* to the first edition.)

PART THE FIRST

'Tis the middle of night by the castle
clock,

And the owls have awakened the crow-
ing cock,

Tu—whit!—Tu—whoo!

And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff, which
From her kennel beneath the rock
Maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for
the hour;

Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is gray;
'Tis a month before the month of May.
And the Spring comes slowly up this
way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the woods so late,
A furlong from the castle gate?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak
But moss and rarest misletoe:
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel!
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is she cannot tell.—
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak
tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at
the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone:
The neck that made the white robe
wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were,
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly!

Mary mother, save me now!
(Said Christabel,) And who art thou?

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet:—
Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness:
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no
fear!
Said Christabel, How camest thou here?
And the lady, whose voice was faint and
sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet:

My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine:
Five warriors seized me yesternorn,
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:
They choked my cries with force and
fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurred amain, their steeds were
white:
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be;
Nor do I know how long it is

(For I have lain entranced I wis)
 Since one, the tallest of the five,
 Took me from the palfrey's back,
 A weary woman, scarce alive.
 Some muttered words his comrades
 spoke :

He placed me underneath this oak ;
 He swore they would return with haste ;
 Whither they went I cannot tell—
 I thought I heard, some minutes past,
 Sounds as of a castle bell.
 Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
 And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her
 hand,
 And comforted fair Geraldine :
 O well, bright dame ! may you command
 The service of Sir Leoline ;
 And gladly our stout chivalry
 Will he send forth and friends withal
 To guide and guard you safe and free
 Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose : and forth with steps they
 passed
 That strove to be, and were not, fast.
 Her gracious stars the lady blest,
 And thus spake on sweet Christabel :
 All our household are at rest
 The hall as silent as the cell ;
 Sir Leoline is weak in health,
 And may not well awakened be,
 But we will move as if in stealth,
 And I beseech your courtesy,
 This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
 Took the key that fitted well ;
 A little door she opened straight,
 All in the middle of the gate ;
 The gate that was ironed within and
 without,

Where an army in battle array had
 marched out.

The lady sank, belike through pain,
 And Christabel with might and main
 Lifted her up, a weary weight,
 Over the threshold of the gate :
 Then the lady rose again,
 And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
 They crossed the court ; right glad they
 were.

And Christabel devoutly cried
 To the lady by her side,
 Praise we the Virgin all divine
 Who hath rescued thee from thy dis-
 tress !

Alas, alas ! said Geraldine,
 I cannot speak for weariness.
 So free from danger, free from fear,
 They crossed the court : right glad they
 were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old
 Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
 The mastiff old did not awake,
 Yet she an angry moan did make !
 And what can ail the mastiff bitch ?
 Never till now she uttered yell
 Beneath the eye of Christabel.
 Perhaps it is the owl's scritch :
 For what can ail the mastiff bitch ?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
 Pass as lightly as you will !
 The brands were flat, the brands were
 dying,

Amid their own white ashes lying ;
 But when the lady passed, there came
 A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;
 And Christabel saw the lady's eye,
 And nothing else saw she thereby,
 Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline
 tall,

Which hung in a murky old niche in the
 wall.

O softly tread, said Christabel,
 My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
 And jealous of the listening air
 They steal their way from stair to stair
 Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
 And now they pass the Baron's room,
 As still as death, with stifled breath !
 And now have reached her chamber
 door ;

And now doth Geraldine press down
 The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
 And not a moonbeam enters here.
 But they without its light can see
 The chamber carved so curiously,
 Carved with figures strange and sweet,
 All made out of the carver's brain,
 For a lady's chamber meet ;
 The lamp with twofold silver chain
 Is fastened to an angel's feet.

The silver lamp burns dead and dim ;
 But Christabel the lamp will trim.
 She trimmed the lamp, and made it
 bright,

And left it swinging to and fro,
 While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
 Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine !
It is a wine of virtuous powers ;
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn ?
Christabel answered—Woe is me !
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the gray-haired friar tell
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
O mother dear ! that thou wert here !
I would, said Geraldine, she were !

But soon with altered voice, said she—
“Off, wandering mother ! Peak and
pine !

I have power to bid thee flee.”
Alas ! what ails poor Geraldine ?
Why stares she with unsettled eye ?
Can she the bodiless dead espy ?
And why with hollow voice cries she,
“Off, woman, off ! this hour is mine—
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off ! ’tis given to me.”

Then Christabel knelt by the lady’s side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—
“Alas !” said she, “this ghastly ride—
Dear lady ! it hath wildered you !”
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, “’tis over now !”

Again the wild-flower wine she drank:
Her fair large eyes ’gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright :
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake—
“All they who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel !
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befel,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself ; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.”

Quoth Christabel, So let it be !
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro,

That vain it were her lids to close ;
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,
And slowly rolled her eyes around ;
Then drawing in her breath aloud,
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast :
Her silken robe, and inner vest,
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold ! her bosom and half her
side—

A sight to dream of, not to tell !
O shield her ! shield sweet Christabel !

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs ;
Ah ! what a stricken look was hers !
Deep from within she seems half-way
To lift some weight with sick assay,
And eyes the maid and seeks delay ;
Then suddenly, as one defied,
Collects herself in scorn and pride,
And lay down by the Maiden’s side !—
And in her arms the maid she took,
Ah wel-a-day !

And with low voice and doleful look
These words did say :
“In the touch of this bosom there
worketh a spell,
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christa-
bel !

Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know
to-morrow,
This mark of my shame, this seal of my
sorrow ;

But vainly thou warrest,
For this is alone in
Thy power to declare,
That in the dim forest
Thou heard’st a low moaning,
And found’st a bright lady, surpassingly
fair ;
And didst bring her home with thee in
love and in charity,
To shield her and shelter her from the
damp air.”

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE FIRST

It was a lovely sight to see
The lady Christabel, when she
Was praying at the old oak tree,
Amid the jagged shadows
Of mossy leafless boughs,
Kneeling in the moonlight,
To make her gentle vows :

Her slender palms together prest,
 Heaving sometimes on her breast;
 Her face resigned to bliss or bale—
 Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
 And both blue eyes more bright than
 clear,
 Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)
 Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
 Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,
 Dreaming that alone, which is—
 O sorrow and shame! Can this be she.
 The lady, who knelt at the old oak
 tree?
 And lo! the worker of these harms,
 That holds the maiden in her arms,
 Seems to slumber still and mild,
 As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
 O Geraldine! since arms of thine
 Have been the lovely lady's prison.
 O Geraldine! one hour was thine—
 Thou'st had thy will! By fain and
 rill,
 The night-birds all that hour were still,
 But now they are jubilant anew,
 From cliff and tower, tu—whoo! tu—
 whoo!
 Tu—whoo! tu—whoo! from wood and
 fell!

And see! the lady Christabel
 Gathers herself from out her trance;
 Her limbs relax, her countenance
 Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin
 lids
 Close o'er her eyes! and tears she sheds—
 Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
 And oft the while she seems to smile
 As infants at a sudden light!

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth
 weep,
 Like a youthful hermitess,
 Beauteous in a wilderness,
 Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
 And, if she move unquietly,
 Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free
 Comes back and tingles in her feet.
 No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
 What if her guardian spirit 'twere,
 What if she knew her mother near?
 But this she knows, in joys and woes,
 That saints will aid if men will call:
 For the blue sky bends over all!

1797. 1816.

PART THE SECOND

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,
 Knells us back to a world of death.
 These words Sir Leoline first said,
 When he rose and found his lady dead:
 These words Sir Leoline will say
 Many a morn to his dying day!

And hence the custom and law began
 That still at dawn the sacristan,
 Who duly pulls the heavy bell,
 Five and forty beads must tell
 Between each stroke—a warning knell,
 Which not a soul can choose but hear
 From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell!
 And let the drowsy sacristan
 Still count as slowly as he can!
 There is no lack of such, I ween,
 As well fill up the space between.
 In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,
 And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
 With ropes of rock and bells of air
 Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
 Who all give back, one after t'other,
 The death-note to their living brother;
 And oft too, by the knell offended,
 Just as their one! two! three! is ended
 The devil mocks the doleful tale
 With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still! through mist and cloud
 That merry peal comes ringing loud;
 And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
 And rises lightly from the bed;
 Puts on her silken vestments white,
 And tricks her hair in lovely plight,
 And nothing doubting of her spell
 Awakens the lady Christabel.
 "Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?
 I trust that you have rested well."

And Christabel awoke and spied
 The same who lay down by her side—
 O rather say, the same whom she
 Raised up beneath the old oak tree!
 Nay, fairer yet! and yet more fair!
 For she belike hath drunken deep
 Of all the blessedness of sleep!
 And while she spake, her looks, her air,
 Such gentle thankfulness declare,
 That (so it seemed) her girded vests
 Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.
 "Sure I have sinn'd!" said Christabel,
 "Now heaven be praised if all be well!"
 And in long faltering tones, yet sweet,
 Did she the lofty lady greet

With such perplexity of mind
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
That He, who on the cross did groan,
Might wash away her sins unknown,
She forthwith led fair Geraldine
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and the lady tall
Are pacing both into the hall,
And pacing on through page and groom,
Enter the Baron's presence-room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest
His gentle daughter to his breast,
With cheerful wonder in his eyes
The lady Geraldine espies,
And gave such welcome to the same,
As might besem so bright a dame!

But when he heard the lady's tale,
And when she told her father's name,
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,
Murmuring o'er the name again,
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine?

Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison
truth;

And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline.
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother:
They parted—ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from pain—
ing—

They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between.
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
Stood gazing on the damsel's face;
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
Came back upon his heart again.

O then the Baron forgot his age,
His noble heart swelled high with rage;
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side
He would proclaim it far and wide,

With trump and solemn heraldry,
That they, who thus had wronged the
dame

Were base as spiced infamy!
"And if they dare deny the same,
My herald shall appoint a week,
And let the recreant traitors seek
My tourney court—that there and then
I may dislodge their reptile souls
From the bodies and forms of men!"
He spake: his eye in lightning rolls!
For the lady was ruthlessly seized; and
he kenned
In the beautiful lady the child of his
friend!

And now the tears were on his face,
And fondly in his arms he took
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,
Prolonging it with joyous look.
Which when she viewed, a vision fell
Upon the soul of Christabel,
The vision of fear, the touch and pain!
She shrank and shuddered, and saw
again—

(Ah, woe is me! Was it for thee,
Thou gentle maid! such sights to see?)
Again she saw that bosom old,
Again she felt that bosom cold,
And drew in her breath with a hissing
sound:

Whereat the Knight turned wildly
round,
And nothing saw, but his own sweet
maid
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
And in its stead that vision blest,
Which comforted her after-rest,
While in the lady's arms she lay,
Had put a rapture in her breast,
And on her lips and o'er her eyes
Spread smiles like light!

With new surprise,
"What ails then my beloved child?"
The Baron said.—His daughter mild
Made answer, "All will yet be well!"
I ween, she had no power to tell
Aught else: so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,
Had deemed her sure a thing divine.
Such sorrow with such grace she
blended,
As if she feared she had offended
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!
And with such lowly tones she prayed
She might be sent without delay

Home to her father's mansion.

"Nay!

Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.

"Ho! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine!

Go thou, with music sweet and loud,
And take two steeds with trappings proud,

And take the youth whom thou lov'st best
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
And clothe you both in solemn vest,
And over the mountains haste along,
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
Detain you on the valley road.

"And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,

My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood,

And reaches soon that castle good
Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are fleet,

Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,

More loud than your horses' echoing feet!

And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,

Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!

Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free—

Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.

He bids thee come without delay

With all thy numerous array;

And take thy lovely daughter home:

And he will meet thee on the way

With all his numerous array

White with their panting palfreys' foam:

And, by mine honor! I will say,

That I repent me of the day

When I spake words of fierce disdain

To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine!—

—For since that evil hour hath flown,

Many a summer's sun hath shone;

Yet ne'er found I a friend again

Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,

Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing;

And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,

His gracious hail on all bestowing;

"Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,

Are sweeter than my harp can tell;

Yet might I gain a boon of thee,

This day my journey should not be,

So strange a dream hath come to me:

That I had vowed with music loud

To clear yon wood from thing unblest,

Warn'd by a vision in my rest!

For in my sleep I saw that dove,
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,
And call'st by thy own daughter's name—

Sir Leoline! I saw the same,
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.

Which when I saw and when I heard,
I wonder'd what might ail the bird;
For nothing near it could I see,
Save the grass and green herbs under
neath the old tree.

"And in my dream, methought, I went
To search out what might there be found;
And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
I went and peered, and could descry
No cause for her distressful cry;
But yet for her dear lady's sake
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
When lo! I saw a bright green snake
Coiled around its wings and neck.
Green as the herbs on which it couched,
Close by the dove's its head it crouched:
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
Swelling its neck as she swelled hers!
I woke; it was the midnight hour,
The clock was echoing in the tower;
But though my slumber was gone by,
This dream it would not pass away—
It seems to live upon my eye!
And thence I vowed this self-same day
With music strong and saintly song
To wander through the forest bare,
Lest aught unholy loiter there."

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,
Half-listening heard him with a smile;
Then turned to Lady Geraldine,
His eyes made up of wonder and love;
And said in courtly accents fine,
"Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous

dove,
With arms more strong than harp of

song,

Thy sire and I will crush the snake!"

He kissed her forehead as he spake,

And Geraldine in maiden wise

Casting down her large bright eyes,

With blushing cheek and courtesy fine

She turned her from Sir Leoline;

Softly gathering up her train,

That o'er her right arm fell again;

And folded her arms across her chest,

And couched her head upon her breast,

And looked askance at Christabel—

Jesu, Maria, shield her well!

▲ snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her
head,
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,
And with somewhat of malice, and more
of dread,
At Christabel she look'd askance!—
One moment—and the sight was fled!
But Christabel in dizzy trance
Stumbling on the unsteady ground
Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound;
And Geraldine again turned round,
And like a thing, that sought relief,
Full of wonder and full of grief,
She rolled her large bright eyes divine
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,
She nothing sees—no sight but one!
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
I know not how, in fearful wise,
So deeply had she drunken in
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
That all her features were resigned
To this sole image in her mind:
And passively did imitate
That look of dull and treacherous hate!
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,
Still picturing that look askance
With forced unconscious sympathy
Full before her father's view—
As far as such a look could be
In eyes so innocent and blue!

And when the trance was o'er, the maid
Paused awhile, and inly prayed:
Then falling at the Baron's feet,
"By my mother's soul do I entreat
That thou this woman send away!"
She said: and more she could not say:
For what she knew she could not tell,
O'er mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
Sir Leoline? Thy only child
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
So fair, so innocent, so mild;
The same, for whom thy lady died!
O, by the pangs of her dear mother,
Think thou no evil of thy child!
For her, and thee, and for no other,
She prayed the moment ere she died:
Prayed that the babe for whom she died
Might prove her dear lord's joy and
pride!

That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
Sir Leoline!

And wouldst thou wrong thy only
child,
Her child and thine?

Within the Baron's heart and brain
If thoughts, like these, had any share,
They only swelled his rage and pain,
And did but work confusion there.
His heart was cleft with pain and rage,
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were
wild,

Dishonor'd thus in his old age;
Dishonor'd by his only child,
And all his hospitality
To the insulted daughter of his friend
By more than woman's jealousy
Brought thus to a disgraceful end—
He rolled his eye with stern regard
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
And said in tones abrupt, austere—
"Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?
I bade thee hence!" The bard obeyed;
And turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the lady Geraldine!

1800. 1816.

THE CONCLUSION TO PART THE SECOND

A little child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks,
That always fuds, and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last
Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness.
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so all unlike each other;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm.
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty
At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what, if in a world of sin
(O sorrow and shame should this be
true!)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.

1801. 1816.

FRANCE: AN ODE

I

YE Clouds! that far above me float and
pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may
control!
Ye Ocean Waves! that, wheresoe'er
ye roll,

Yield homage only to eternal laws!
 Ye Woods! that listen to the night-
 bird's singing,
 Midway the smooth and perilous slope
 reclined,
 Save when your own imperious branches
 swinging,
 Have made a solemn music of the
 wind!
 Where, like a man beloved of God,
 Through glooms, which never woodman
 trod,
 How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
 My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds
 I wound,
 Inspired beyond the guess of folly,
 By each rude shape and wild unconquer-
 able sound!
 D ye loud Waves! and O ye Forests
 high!
 And O ye Clouds that far above me
 soared!
 Thou rising sun! thou blue rejoicing
 Sky!
 Yea, every thing that is and will be
 free!
 Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye
 be,
 With what deep worship I have still
 adored
 The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II

When France in wrath her giant-limbs
 upreared,
 And with that oath which smote air,
 earth and sea,
 Stamped her strong foot and said she
 would be free,
 Bear witness for me, how I hoped and
 feared!
 With what a joy my lofty gratulation
 Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band:
 And when to whelm the disenchant-
 ed nation,
 Like fiends embattled by a wizard's
 wand,
 The Monarchs marched in evil day,
 And Britain join'd the dire array;
 Though dear her shores and circling
 ocean,
 Though many friendships, many youth-
 ful loves
 Had swoln the patriot emotion
 And flung a magic light o'er all her hills
 and groves;
 Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang
 defeat

To all that braved the tyrant-quelling
 lance,
 And shame too long delay'd and vain
 retreat!
 For ne'er, O Liberty! with partial aim
 I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy
 flame;
 But blessed the pæans of delivered
 France,
 And hung my head and wept at Britain's
 name.

III

"And what," I said, "though Blas-
 phemy's loud scream
 With that sweet music of deliverance
 strove!
 Though all the fierce and drunken
 passions wove
 A dance more wild than e'er was
 maniac's dream!
 Ye storms, that round the dawning
 east assembled,
 The Sun was rising, though ye hid his
 light!
 And when to soothe my soul, that
 hoped and trembled,
 The dissonance ceased, and all seemed
 calm and bright;
 When France her front deep-scarr'd
 and gory
 Concealed with clustering wreaths of
 glory;
 When insupportably advancing,
 Her arm made mockery of the war-
 rior's ramp;
 While timid looks of fury glancing,
 Domestic treason, crushed beneath her
 fatal stamp,
 Writhed like a wounded dragon in his
 gore;
 Then I reproached my fears that
 would not flee;
 "And soon," I said, "shall Wisdom
 teach her lore
 In the low huts of them that toil and
 groan;
 And, conquering by her happiness
 alone,
 Shall France compel the nations to be
 free,
 Till Love and Joy look round, and call
 the earth their own."

IV

Forgive me, Freedom! O forgive those
 dreams!
 I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud
 lament.

From bleak Helvetia's icy caverns
sent—
I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained
streams !
Heroes, that for your peaceful country
perished,
And ye, that fleeing, spot your moun-
tain snows
With bleeding wounds ; forgive me,
that I cherished
One thought that ever blessed your cruel
foes !
To scatter rage and traitorous guilt
Where Peace her jealous home had
built ;
A patriot-race to disinherit
Of all that made their stormy wilds so
dear ;
And with inexpiable spirit
To taint the bloodless freedom of the
mountaineer—
O France, that mockest Heaven, adul-
terous, blind,
And patriot only in pernicious toils !
Are these thy boasts, Champion of human
kind ?
To mix with Kings in the low lust of
sway,
Yell in the hunt, and share the murder-
ous prey ;
To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
From freemen torn ; to tempt and to
betray ?

V

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in
vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion ! In
mad game
They burst their manacles and wear
the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier
chain !
O Liberty ! with profitless endeavor
Have I pursued thee, many a weary
hour ;
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain
nor ever
Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human
power.
Alike from all, howe'er they praise
thee,
(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays
thee)
Alike from Priestcraft's harpy
minions,
And factious Blasphemy's obscener
slaves.

Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
The guide of homeless winds, and play-
mate of the waves !
And then I felt thee !—on that sea-cliff's
verge,
Whose pines, scarce travelled by the
breeze above,
Had made one murmur with the distant
surge !
Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples
bare,
And shot my being through earth, sea
and air,
Possessing all things with intensest
love,
O Liberty ! my spirit felt thee there.
February, 1798. April 16, 1798.

W. FROST AT MIDNIGHT

THE Frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind. The owlet's
cry
Came loud—and hark, again ! loud as
before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which
suits
Abstruser musings : save that at my
side
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed ! so calm, that it dis-
turbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and
wood,
This populous village ! Sea, and hill, and
wood.
With all the numberless goings-on of
life,
Inaudible as dreams ! the thin blue
flame
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers
not ;
Only that film, which fluttered on the
grate,
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet
thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of
nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who
live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling
Spirit
By its own moods interprets, everywhere
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of Thought.

But O! how oft,
How oft, at school, with most believing
mind,
Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,
To watch that fluttering *stranger*! and
as oft
With unclosed lids, already had I
dreamt
Of my sweet birth-place, and the old
church-tower,
Whose bells the poor man's only music
rang
From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-
day,
So sweetly, that they stirred and
haunted me
With a wild pleasure, falling on mine
ear
Most like articulate sounds of things to
come!
So gazed I, till the soothing things, I
dreamt,
Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged
my dreams!
And so I boded all the following morn,
Awd by the stern preceptor's face,
mine eye
Fixed with mock study on my swim-
ming book:
Save if the door half opened, and I
snatched
A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped
up,
For still I hoped to see the *stranger's*
face,
Townsmen, or aunt, or sister more be-
loved,
My play-mate when we both were
clothed alike!
Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by
my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this
deep calm,
Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought!
My babe so beautiful! it thrills my
heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at
thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far
other lore,
And in far other scenes! For I was
reared
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters
dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and
stars.
But *thou*, my babe! shalt wander like a
breeze

By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the
crag
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the
clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes
and shores
And mountain crags: so shalt thou see
and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelli-
ble
Of that eternal language, which thy
God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself.
Great universal Teacher! he shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.
Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to
thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general
earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and
sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare
branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh
thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the
eave-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.
February, 1798. 1798.

W.

LOVE

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.
Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruined tower.
The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene
Had blended with the lights of eve:
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!
She leant against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.
Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-
woods,
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight!

And that unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than
death
The Lady of the Land!

And how she wept, and clasped his
knees;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay;—

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love, and virgin-
shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stepped—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace:
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride,
1798-1799. December 21, 1799.

THE BALLAD OF THE DARK LADIÉ

A FRAGMENT

BENEATH yon birch with silver bark,
And boughs so pendulous and fair,
The brook falls scatter'd down the rock:
And all is mossy there!

And there upon the moss she sits,
The Dark Ladié in silent pain;
The heavy tear is in her eye,
And drops and swells again.

Three times she sends her little page
Up the castled mountain's breast,
If he might find the Knight that wears
The Griffin for his crest.

The sun was sloping down the sky,
And she had linger'd there all day,
Counting moments, dreaming fears—
Oh wherefore can he stay?

She hears a rustling o'er the brook,
 She sees far off a swinging bough!
 "Tis He! 'Tis my betrothed Knight!
 Lord Falkland, it is Thou!"

She springs, she clasps him round the neck,

She sobs a thousand hopes and fears, .
 Her kisses glowing on his cheeks
 She quenches with her tears.

* * * *

"My friends with rude ungente words
 They scoff and bid me fly to thee!
 O give me shelter in thy breast!
 O shield and shelter me!"

"My Henry, I have given thee much,
 I gave what I can ne'er recall.
 I gave my heart, I gave my peace,
 O Heaven! I gave thee all."

The Knight made answer to the Maid,
 While to his heart he held her hand,
 "Nine castles hath my noble sire,
 None statelier in the land."

"The fairest one shall be my love's,
 The fairest castle of the nine!
 Wait only till the stars peep out,
 The fairest shall be thine:"

"Wait only till the hand of eve
 Hath wholly closed yon western bars,
 And through the dark we two will steal
 Beneath the twinkling stars!"—

"The dark? the dark? No! not the dark!
 The twinkling stars? How, Henry?
 How?
 O God! 'twas in the eye of noon
 He pledged his sacred vow!"

"And in the eye of noon my love
 Shall lead me from my mother's door,
 Sweet boys and girls all clothed in white
 Strewing flowers before:"

"But first the nodding minstrels go
 With music meet for lordly bowers,
 The children next in snow-white vests,
 Strewing buds and flowers!"

"And then my love and I shall pace,
 My jet black hair in pearly braids,
 Between our comely bachelors
 And blushing bridal maids."

* * * *

1798. 1834.

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM AT ELBINGERODE,
 IN THE HARTZ FOREST

I STOOD on Brocken's sovran height, and
 saw

Woods crowding upon woods, hills over
 hills,

A surging scene, and only limited
 By the blue distance. Heavily my way
 Downward I dragged through fir groves
 evermore,

Where bright green moss heaves in
 sepulchral forms

Speckled with sunshine; and, but sel-
 dom heard,

The sweet bird's song became an hollow
 sound:

And the breeze, murmuring indivisibly,
 Preserved its solemn murmur most dis-
 tinct

From many a note of many a waterfall,
 And the brook's chatter; 'mid whose
 islet-stones

The dingy kidding with its tinkling bell
 Leaped frolicsome, or old romantic goat
 Sat, his white beard slow waving. I
 moved on

In low and languid mood: for I had
 found

That outward forms, the loffiest, still
 receive

Their finer influence from the Life
 within;—

Fair cyphers else: fair, but of import
 vague

Or unconcerning, where the heart not
 finds

History or prophecy of friend, or child,
 Or gentle maid, our first and early love,
 Or father, or the venerable name

Of our adored country! O thou Queen,
 Thou delegated Deity of Earth,

O dear, dear England! how my longing
 eye

Turned westward, shaping in the steady
 clouds

Thy sands and high white cliffs!

My native Land!
 Filled with the thought of thee this
 heart was proud,

Yea, mine eye swam with tears: that
 all the view

From sovran Brocken, woods and woody
 hills,

Floated away, like a departing dream,

Feeble and dim! Stranger, these impulses
 Blame thou not lightly; nor will I profane,
 With hasty judgment or injurious doubt,
 That man's sublimer spirit, who can feel
 That God is everywhere! the God who framed
 Mankind to be one mighty family,
 Himself our Father, and the World our Home.

May 17, 1799. September 17, 1799.

ODE TO TRANQUILLITY

TRANQUILLITY! thou better name
 Than all the family of Fame!
 Thou ne'er wilt leave my riper age
 To low intrigue, or factious rage;
 For oh! dear child of thoughtful Truth,
 To thee I gave my early youth,
 And left the bark, and blest the steadfast shore,
 Ere yet the tempest rose and scared me
 with its roar.

Who late and lingering seeks thy shrine,
 On him but seldom, Power divine,
 Thy spirit rests! Satiety
 And Sloth, poor counterfeits of thee.
 Mock the tired worldling. Idle Hope
 And dire Remembrance interlope,
 To vex the feverish slumbers of the mind:
 The bubble floats before, the spectre
 stalks behind.

But me thy gentle hand will lead
 At morning through the accustomed mead:
 And in the sultry summer's heat
 Will build me up a mossy seat;
 And when the gust of Autumn crowds,
 And breaks the busy moonlight clouds,
 Thou best the thought canst raise, the heart attune,
 Light as the busy clouds, calm as the
 gliding moon.

The feeling heart, the searching soul,
 To thee I dedicate the whole!
 And while within myself I trace
 The greatness of some future race,
 Aloof with hermit-eye I scan

The present works of present man—
 A wild and dream-like trade of blood
 and guile,
 Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a
 smile! 1801. December 4, 1801.

W DEJECTION: AN ODE¹

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
 With the old Moon in her arms;
 And I fear, I fear, my master dear!
 We shall have a deadly storm.

Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.

I

WELL! If the Bard was weather-wise,
 who made
 The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick
 Spence,
 This night, so tranquil now, will not
 go hence
 Unroused by winds, that ply a busier
 trade
 Than those which mould yon cloud in
 lazy flakes,
 Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans
 and rakes
 Upon the strings of this Æolian
 lute,
 Which better far were mute.
 For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!
 And overspread with phantom light,
 (With swimming phantom light o'er-
 spread
 But rimmed and circled by a silver
 thread)
 I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
 The coming-on of rain and squally
 blast,
 And oh! that even now the gust were
 swelling,
 And the slant night-shower driving
 loud and fast!
 Those sounds which oft have raised me,
 whilst they awed,
 And sent my soul abroad,
 Might now perhaps their wonted impulse
 give,
 Might startle this dull pain, and make it
 move and live!

¹ This Ode was originally written to William Wordsworth, who was addressed as "Edmund" in the poem when first printed, on the day of Wordsworth's marriage, October 4, 1802. In that copy, the name "Edmund" occurs at every point where "Lady" is found in the later versions and also where the name "Otway" occurs, in the seventh stanza; there is a corresponding difference of the personal pronouns, and some other slight differences of text, the most important of which is in the conclusion, as noted below.

II

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
 Astifed, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
 Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,

In word, or sigh, or tear—
 O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,
 To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,

All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
 Have I been gazing on the western sky,
 And its peculiar tint of yellow green;
 And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye!

And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
 That give away their motion to the stars:
 Those stars, that glide behind them or between,

Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen;

Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew
 In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
 I see them all so excellently fair,
 I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

III

My genial spirits fail;
 And what can these avail
 To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?

It were a vain endeavor,
 Though I should gaze for ever
 On that green light that lingers in the west;

I may not hope from outward forms to win

The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

IV

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
 And in our life alone does Nature live;
 Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!

And would we aught behold, of higher worth,

Than that inanimate cold world allowed
 To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
 Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth

A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
 Enveloping the Earth—

And from the soul itself must there be sent

A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,

Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

V

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me

What this strong music in the soul may be!

What, and wherein it doth exist,
 This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,

This beautiful and beauty-making power.

Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was given,

Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,

Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and shower,

Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
 Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower,

A new Earth and new Heaven,
 Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—

Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—

We in ourselves rejoice!
 And thence flows all that charms our ear or sight,

All melodies the echoes of that voice,
 All colors a suffusion from that light.

VI

There was a time when, though my path was rough,

This joy within me dallied with distress,

And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
 Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness:

For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,

And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.

But now afflictions bow me down to earth:

Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth;

But oh! each visitation
 Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,

My shaping spirit of Imagination.

For not to think of what I needs must feel,

But to be still and patient, all I can;

And haply by abstruse research to steal
 From my own nature all the natural man—

This was my sole resource, my only plan;

Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream !
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
Which long has raved unnoticed.
What a scream
Of agony by torture lengthened out
That lute sent forth ! Thou Wind, that rav'st without,
Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted tree,
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
Mad Lutanist ! who in this month of showers,
Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry song,
The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.
Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds !
Thou mighty Poet, even to frenzy bold !
What tell'st thou now about ?
'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,
With groans of trampled men, with smarting wounds—
At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the cold !
But hush ! there is a pause of deepest silence !
And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
With groans, and tremulous shudderings—all is over—
It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud !
A tale of less affright,
And tempered with delight,
As Otway's¹ self had framed the tender lay.

¹ In the first printed copy, "*Edmund's*," referring to Wordsworth. The following lines are evidently an allusion to Wordsworth's *Lucy Gray*. The conclusion is as follows in the first printed copy :

With light heart may he rise,
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
And sing his lofty song, and teach me to rejoice !

'Tis of a little child
Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way ;
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother hear.

VIII

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep :
Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep !
Visit her, gentle Sleep ! with wings of healing,
And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,
Silent as though they watched the sleeping Earth !
With light heart may she rise,
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice ;
To her may all things live, from pole to pole,
Their life the eddying of her living soul !
O simple spirit, guided from above,
Dear Lady ! friend devoutest of my choice,
Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.

April 4, 1802. October 4, 1802.

HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI

Besides the Rivers Arve and Arveiron, which have their sources in the foot of Mont Blanc, five conspicuous torrents rush down its sides; and within a few paces of the glaciers the Gentiana Major grows in immense numbers, with its "flowers of loveliest blue." (*Coleridge*.)

HAST thou a charm to stay the morning-star
In his steep course ? So long he seems to pause

O EDMUND, friend of my devoutest choice,
O rais'd from anxious dread and busy care,
By the immenseness of the good and fair
Which thou see'st everywhere,
Joy lifts thy spirit, joy attunes thy voice,
To thee do all things live from pole to pole,
Their life the eddying of thy living soul !
O simple spirit, guided from above,
O lofty Poet, full of life and love,
Brother and friend of my devoutest choice,
Thus may'st Thou ever, evermore rejoice !

On thy bald awful head, O sovran
BLANC!

The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful
Form!

Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial,
black,

An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest
it,

As with a wedge! But when I look
again,

It is thine own calm home, thy crystal
shrine,

Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent Mount! I gazed upon
thee,

Till thou, still present to the bodily
sense,

Didst vanish from my thought: en-
tranced in prayer

I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening
to it,

Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending
with my Thought,

Yea, with my Life and Life's own secret
joy:

Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing—there
As in her natural form, swelled vast to
Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive
praise

Thou owest! not alone these swelling
tears,

Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my heart,
awake!

Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my
Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovereign of
the Vale!

O struggling with the darkness all the
night,

And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky or when
they sink:

Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the
dawn

Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter
praise!

Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in
Earth?

Who fill'd thy countenance with rosy
light?

Who made thee parent of perpetual
streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely
glad!

Who called you forth from night and
utter death,

From dark and icy caverns called you
forth,

Down those precipitous, black, jagged
rocks,

For ever shattered and the same for
ever?

Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury,
and your joy,

Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence
came),

Here let the billows stiffen, and have
rest?

Ye Ice-falls! ye that from the moun-
tain's brow

Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty
voice,

And stopped at once amid their maddest
plunge!

Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the Gates of
Heaven

Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade
the sun

Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with
living flowers

Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at
your feet?—

GOD! let the torrents, like a shout of
nations,

Answer! and let the ice-plains echo,
GOD!

GOD! sing ye meadow-streams with
gladsome voice!

Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-
like sounds!

And they too have a voice, yon piles of
snow,

And in their perilous fall shall thunder,
GOD!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal
frost!

Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's
nest!

Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain-
storm!

Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds !
 Ye signs and wonders of the element !
 Utter forth GOD, and fill the hills with praise !

Thou too, hoar Mount ! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
 Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
 Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
 Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy breast—
 Thou too again, stupendous Mountain ! thou
 That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
 In adoration, upward from thy base
 Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
 Solemnly seemest, like a vapory cloud,
 To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,
 Rise like a cloud of incense from the Earth !
 Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
 Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
 Great Hierarch ! tell thou the silent sky,
 And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun
 Earth, with her thousand voices, praises GOD.

1802. September 11, 1802.

THE GOOD, GREAT MAN

“How seldom, friend ! a good great man inherits
 Honor or wealth with all his worth and pains !
 It sounds like stories from the land of spirits
 If any man obtain that which he merits
 Or any merit that which he obtains.”

REPLY TO THE ABOVE

For shame, dear friend, renounce this canting strain !
 What would'st thou have a good great man obtain ?
 Place ? titles ? salary ? a gilded chain ?
 Or throne of corpses which his sword had slain ?
 Greatness and goodness are not *means*,
 but *ends* !

Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
 The good great man ? *three* treasures,
 LOVE, and LIGHT,
 And CALM THOUGHTS, regular as infant's breath :
 And three firm friends, more sure than day and night,
 HIMSELF, his MAKER, and the ANGEL DEATH !

1802. September 23, 1802.

THE PAINS OF SLEEP

ERE on my bed my limbs I lay,
 It hath not been my use to pray
 With moving lips or bended knees ;
 But silently, by slow degrees,
 My spirit I to Love compose,
 In humble trust mine eyelids close,
 With reverential resignation,
 No wish conceived, no thought exprest,
 Only a *sense* of supplication ;
 A sense o'er all my soul imprest
 That I am weak, yet not unblest,
 Since in me, round me, everywhere
 Eternal Strength and Wisdom are.

But yester-night I pray'd aloud
 In anguish and in agony,
 Up-starting from the fiendish crowd
 Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me :
 A lurid light, a trampling throng,
 Sense of intolerable wrong,
 And whom I scorned, those only strong !
 Thirst of revenge, the powerless will
 Still baffled, and yet burning still !
 Desire with loathing strangely mixed
 On wild or hateful objects fixed.
 Fantastic passions ! maddening brawl !
 And shame and terror over all !
 Deeds to be hid which were not hid,
 Which all confused I could not know
 Whether I suffered, or I did :
 For all seem'd guilt, remorse or woe,
 My own or others still the same
 Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame !

So two nights passed : the night's dismay
 Saddened and stunned the coming day.
 Sleep, the wide blessing, seemed to me
 Distemper's worst calamity.
 The third night, when my own loud scream
 Had waked me from the fiendish dream
 O'ercome with sufferings strange and wild,

I wept as I had been a child :
 And having thus by tears subdued
 My anguish to a milder mood,
 Such punishments, I said, were due
 To natures deepest stained with sin :
 For aye entempesting anew
 The unfathomable hell within
 The horror of their deeds to view,
 To know and loathe, yet wish and do !
 Such griefs with such men well agree,
 But wherefore, wherefore fall on me ?
 To be beloved is all I need,
 And whom I love, I love indeed.

1803. 1816.

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

COMPOSED ON THE NIGHT AFTER HIS RE-
 CITATION OF A POEM ON THE GROWTH
 OF AN INDIVIDUAL MIND

FRIEND of the wise ! and Teacher of the
 Good !
 Into my heart have I received that Lay
 More than historic, that prophetic Lay
 Wherein (high theme by thee first sung
 aright)
 Of the foundations and the building up
 Of a Human Spirit thou hast dared to
 tell
 What may be told, to the understanding
 mind
 Revealable ; and what within the mind
 By vital breathings secret as the soul
 Of vernal growth, oft quickens in the
 heart
 Thoughts all too deep for words !—
 Theme hard as high !
 Of smiles spontaneous, and mysterious
 fears
 (The first-born they of Reason and twin-
 birth),
 Of tides obedient to external force,
 And currents self-determined, as might
 seem,
 Or by some inner Power ; of moments
 awful,
 Now in thy inner life, and now abroad,
 When power streamed from thee, and
 thy soul received
 The light reflected, as a light bestowed—
 Of fancies fair, and milder hours of
 youth,
 Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought
 Industrious in its joy, in vales and glens
 Native or outland, lakes and famous
 hills !
 Or on the lonely high-road, when the
 stars

Were rising : or by secret mountain-
 streams,
 The guides and the companions of thy
 way !

Of more than Fancy, of the Social Sense
 Distending wide, and man beloved as
 man,
 Where France in all her towns lay vi-
 brating
 Like some becalmed bark beneath the
 burst
 Of Heaven's immediate thunder, when
 no cloud
 Is visible, or shadow on the main.
 For thou wert there, thine own brows
 garlanded,
 Amid the tremor of a realm aglow,
 Amid a mighty nation jubilant,
 When from the general heart of human-
 kind
 Hope sprang forth like a full-born
 Deity !
 —Of that dear Hope afflicted and
 struck down,
 So summoned homeward, thenceforth
 calm and sure
 From the dread watch-tower of man's
 absolute self
 With light unwaning on her eyes, to
 look
 Far on—herself a glory to behold,
 The angel of the vision ! Then (last
 strain)
 Of Duty, chosen Laws controlling choice,
 Action and joy !—An orphic song in-
 deed,
 A song divine of high and passionate
 thoughts
 To their own music chanted !

O great Bard !
 Ere yet that last strain dying awed the
 air,
 With steadfast eye I viewed thee in the
 choir
 Of ever-enduring men. The truly great
 Have all one age, and from one visible
 space
 Shed influence ! They, both in power
 and act,
 Are permanent, and Time is not with
 them,
 Save as it worketh for them, they in it.
 Nor less a sacred Roll than those of old,
 And to be placed, as they, with gradual
 fame
 Among the archives of mankind, thy
 work

Makes audible a linked lay of Truth,
 Of Truth profound a sweet continuous
 lay,
 Not learnt, but native, her own natural
 notes!
 1 Ah! as I listen'd with a heart forlorn,
 The pulses of my being beat anew:
 And even as life returns upon the
 drowned,
 Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of
 pains—
 Keen pangs of Love, awakening as a
 babe
 Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart;
 And fears self-willed, that shunned the
 eye of hope;
 And hope that scarce would know itself
 from fear;
 Sense of past youth, and manhood come
 in vain,
 And genius given, and knowledge won
 in vain;
 And all which I had culled in wood-
 walks wide,
 And all which patient toil had reared,
 and all
 Commune with *thee* had opened out—
 but flowers
 Strewed on my corse, and borne upon
 my bier,
 In the same coffin, for the self-same
 grave!

That way no more! and ill beseems
 it me,
 Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,
 Singing of glory, and futurity,
 To wander back on such unhealthful
 road,
 Plucking the poisons of self-harm! And
 ill
 Such intertwine beseems triumphal
 wreaths

1 In place of this line and the next, there stood in the manuscript copy of January 1807 the following lines:

Dear shall it be to every human heart,
 To me how more than dearest! me, on whom
 Comfort from thee, and utterance of thy love,
 Came with such heights and depths of harmony.
 Such sense of wings unlifting, that its might
 Scatter'd and quell'd me, till my thoughts be-
 came
 A bodily tumult; and thy faithful hopes,
 Thy hopes of me, dear Friend, by me unfelt!
 Were troublous to me, almost as a voice,
 Familiar once, and more than musical;
 As a dear woman's voice to one cast forth,
 A wanderer with a worn-out heart forlorn,
 Mid strangers pining with untended wounds.
 O years, too well thou know'st, of what sad
 years
 The long suppression had benumb'd my soul. . . .

Strew'd before *thy* advancing!
 Nor do thou,
 Sage Bard! impair the memory of that
 hour
 Of thy communion with my nobler
 mind
 By pity or grief, already felt too long!
 Nor let my words import more blame
 than needs.
 The tumult rose and ceased: for Peace
 is high
 Where wisdom's voice has found a
 listening heart.
 Amid the howl of more than wintry
 storms,
 The halcyon hears the voice of vernal
 hours
 Already on the wing.
 Eve following eve,
 Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense
 of Home
 Is sweetest! moments for their own sake
 hailed
 And more desired, more precious, for
 thy song,
 In silence listening, like a devout
 child,
 My soul lay passive, by thy various
 strain
 Driven as in surges now beneath the
 stars,
 With momentary stars of my own
 birth,
 Fair constellated foam, still darting off
 Into the darkness; now a tranquil
 sea,
 Outspread and bright, yet swelling to
 the moon.

And when—O Friend! my comforter
 and guide!
 Strong in thyself, and powerful to give
 strength!—
 Thy long sustained Song finally closed,
 And thy deep voice had ceased—yet
 thou thyself
 Wert still before my eyes, and round us
 both
 That happy vision of beloved faces—
 Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of
 its close
 I sate, my being blended in one thought
 (Thought was it? or aspiration? or re-
 solve?)
 Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the
 sound—
 And when I rose, I found myself in
 prayer.

January, 1807. 1817.

SONG FROM ZAPOLYA

A SUNNY shaft did I behold,
From sky to earth it slanted :
And poised therein a bird so bold—
Sweet bird, thou wert enchanted !

He sunk, he rose, he twinkled, he trolled
Within that shaft of sunny mist ;
His eyes of fire, his beak of gold,
All else of amethyst !

And thus he sang : Adieu ! adieu !
Love's dreams prove seldom true.
The blossoms they make no delay ;
The sparkling dew-drops will not stay.
Sweet month of May,
We must away ;
Far far away !
To-day ! to-day ! 1815. 1817.

YOUTH AND AGE

VERSE, a breeze mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine ! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young !

When I was young ?—Ah, woeful When !
Ah ! for the change 'twixt Now and
Then !

This breathing house not built with
hands,

This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly *then* it flashed along :—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide !
Nought cared this body for wind or
weather

When Youth and I lived in't together.
Flowers are lovely ; Love is flower-like ;
Friendship is a sheltering tree ;
O ! the joys, that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,

Ere I was old !

Ere I was old ? Ah woeful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here !
O, Youth ! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be that Thou art gone !
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd :—
And thou wert aye a masker bold !
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To make believe, that thou art gone ?
I see these locks in silvery slips,

This drooping gait, this altered size :
But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes !
Life is but thought : so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.
Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve !
Where no hope is, life 's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,

When we are old :

That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismiss ;
Yet hath out-stay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

1823—April, 1832. 1828—June, 1832.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE

ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs leave
their lair—

The bees are stirring—birds are on the
wing—

And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of
Spring !

And I the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build,
nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths
blossom,

Have traced the fount whence streams
of nectar flow.

Bloom, O ye amaranths ! bloom for
whom ye may,

For me ye bloom not ! Glide, rich
streams, away !

With lips unbrightened, wreathless
brow, I stroll :

And would you learn the spells that
drowse my soul ?

Work without Hope draws nectar in a
sieve,

And Hope without an object cannot live.
February, 1827. 1828.

THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO

OF late, in one of those most weary
hours,

When life seems emptied of all genial
powers,

A dreary mood, which he who ne'er has
known

May bless his happy lot, I sate alone ;
And, from the numbing spell to win re-

lief, [grief,
Call'd on the Past for thought of glee or

In vain ! bereft alike of grief and glee,
 I sate and cowl'd o'er my own vacancy !
 And as I watched the dull continuous
 ache,
 Which, all else slumbering, seem'd alone
 to wake ;
 O Friend ! long wont to notice yet conceal,
 And soothe by silence what words cannot heal,
 I but half saw that quiet hand of thine
 Place on my desk this exquisite design,
 Boccaccio's Garden and its faery,
 The love, the joyaunce, and the gal-
 lantry !
 An Idyll, with Boccaccio's spirit warm,
 Framed in the silent poesy of form.
 Like flocks a-down a newly-bathed steep
 Emerging from a mist : or like a stream
 Of music soft, that not dispels the sleep,
 But casts in happier moulds the
 slumberer's dream,
 Gazed by an idle eye with silent might
 The picture stole upon my inward
 sight.
 A tremulous warmth crept gradual o'er
 my chest,
 As though an infant's finger touch'd my
 breast.
 And one by one (I know not whence)
 were brought
 All spirits of power that most had stirr'd
 my thought
 In selfless boyhood, on a new world tost
 Of wonder, and in its own fancies lost ;
 Or charm'd my youth, that, kindled from
 above,
 Loved ere it loved, and sought a form
 for love ;
 Or lent a lustre to the earnest scan
 Of manhood, musing what and whence
 is man !
 Wild strain of Scalds, that in the sea-
 worn caves
 Rehears'd their war-spell to the winds
 and waves ;
 Or fateful hymn of those prophetic
 maids,
 That call'd on Hertha in deep forest
 glades ;
 Or minstrel lay, that cheer'd the baron's
 feast ;
 Or rhyme of city pomp, of monk and
 priest,
 Judge, mayor, and many a guild in long
 array,
 To high-church pacing on the great
 saint's day.
 And many a verse which to myself I sang,

That woke the tear yet stole away the
 pang.
 Of hopes which in lamenting I renew'd.
 And last, a matron now, of sober mien,
 Yet radiant still and with no earthly
 sheen,
 Whom as a faery child my childhood
 woo'd
 Even in my dawn of thought—Philos-
 ophy ;
 Though then unconscious of herself,
 pardie,
 She bore no other name than Poesy ;
 And, like a gift from heaven, in life-ful
 glee,
 That had but newly left a mother's knee,
 Prattled and play'd with bird and flower,
 and stone,
 As if with elfin playfellows well known,
 And life reveal'd to innocence alone.

Thanks, gentle artist ! now I can descrie,
 Thy fair creation with a mastering eye,
 And *all* awake ! And now in fix'd gaze
 stand,
 Now wander through the Eden of thy
 hand ;
 Praise the green arches, on the fountain
 clear
 See fragment shadows of the crossing
 deer ;
 And with that serviceable nymph I stoop
 The crystal from its restless pool to
 scoop.
 I see no longer ! I myself am there,
 Sit on the ground-sward, and the
 banquet share.
 'Tis I, that sweep that lute's love-echo-
 ing strings,
 And gaze upon the maid who gazing
 sings ;
 Or pause and listen to the tinkling bells
 Frow the high tower, and think that
 there she dwells.
 With old Boccaccio's soul I stand possest,
 And breathe an air like life, that swells
 my chest.

The brightness of the world, O thou
 once free,
 And always fair, rare land of courtesy !
 O Florence ! with the Tuscan fields and
 hills
 And famous Arno, fed with all their
 rills ;
 Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy !
 Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures
 thine,
 The golden corn, the olive, and the vine,

SCOTT

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SCOTT

WILLIAM AND HELEN

Imitated from Bürger's *Lenore*. See Lockhart's Life of Scott, Volume I, Chap. 7.

FROM heavy dreams fair Helen rose,
And eyed the dawning red ;
"Alas, my love, thou tarriest long !
O art thou false or dead ?"

With gallant Frederick's princely power
He sought the bold crusade,
But not a word from Judah's wars
Told Helen how he sped.

With Paynim and with Saracen
At length a truce was made,
And every knight returned to dry
The tears his love had shed.

Our gallant host was homeward bound
With many a song of joy ;
Green waved the laurel in each plume,
The badge of victory.

And old and young, and sire and son,
To meet them crowd the way,
With shouts and mirth and melody,
The debt of love to pay.

Full many a maid her true-love met,
And sobbed in his embrace,
And fluttering joy in tears and smiles
Arrayed full many a face.

Nor joy nor smile for Helen sad,
She sought the host in vain ;
For none could tell her William's fate,
If faithless or if slain.

The martial band is past and gone ;
She rends her raven hair,
And in distraction's bitter mood
She weeps with wild despair.

"O, rise, my child," her mother said,
"Nor sorrow thus in vain ;
A perjured lover's fleeting heart
No tears recall again."

"O, Mother, what is gone is gone,
What's lost forever lorn :
Death, death alone can comfort me ;
O had I ne'er been born !

"O, break, my heart, O, break at once !
Drink my life-blood, Despair !
No joy remains on earth for me,
For me in heaven no share."

"O, enter not in judgment, Lord !"
The pious mother prays ;
"Impute not guilt to thy frail child !
She knows not what she says.

"O, say thy pater-noster, child !
O, turn to God and grace !
His will, that turned thy bliss to bale,
Can change thy bale to bliss."

"O mother, mother, what is bliss ?
O mother, what is bale ?
My William's love was heaven on earth,
Without it earth is hell.

"Why should I pray to ruthless Heaven,
Since my loved William's slain ?
I only prayed for William's sake,
And all my prayers were vain."

"O, take the sacrament, my child,
And check these tears that flow ;
By resignation's humble prayer,
O, hallowed be thy woe !"

"No sacrament can quench this fire,
Or slake this scorching pain ;
No sacrament can bid the dead
Arise and live again.

"O, break, my heart, O, break at once !
Be thou my god, Despair !
Heaven's heaviest blow has fallen on me,
And vain each fruitless prayer."

"O, enter not in judgment, Lord,
With thy frail child of clay !
She knows not what her tongue has
spoke ;
Impute it not, I pray !

"Forbear, my child, this desperate woe,
And turn to God and grace ;
Well can devotion's heavenly glow
Convert thy bale to bliss."

"O mother, mother, what is bliss ?
O mother, what is bale ?
Without my William what were heaven,
Or with him what were hell ?"

Wild she arraigns the eternal doom,
Upbraids each sacred power,
Till, spent, she sought her silent room,
All in the lonely tower.

She beat her breast, she wrung her
hands,
Till sun and day were o'er,
And through the glimmering lattice
shone
The twinkling of the star.

Then, crash ! the heavy drawbridge fell
That o'er the moat was hung ;
And, clatter ! clatter ! on its boards
The hoof of courser rung.

The clank of echoing steel was heard
As off the rider bounded ;
And slowly on the winding stair
A heavy footstep sounded.

And hark ! and hark ! a knock — tap !
tap !
A rustling stifled noise ;—
Door-latch and tinkling staples ring ;—
At length a whispering voice.

"Awake, awake, arise, my love !
How, Helen, dost thou fare ?
Wak'st thou, or sleep'st ! laugh'st thou,
or weep'st ?
Hast thought on me, my fair ?"

"My love ! my love !—so late by night !—
I waked, I wept for thee ;
Much have I borne since dawn of morn ;
Where, William, couldst thou be ?"

"We saddle late—from Hungary
I rode since darkness fell ;
And to its bourne we both return
Before the matin-bell."

"O, rest this night within my arms,
And warm thee in their fold !
Chill howls through hawthorn bush the
wind :—
My love is deadly cold."

"Let the wind howl through hawthorn
bush !
This night we must away ;
The steed is wight, the spur is bright ;
I cannot stay till day."

"Busk, busk, and bouné ! Thou mount'st
behind
Upon my black barb steed :
O'er stock and stile, a hundred miles,
We haste to bridal bed."

"To-night—to-night a hundred miles !—
O dearest William, stay !
The bell strikes twelve—dark, dismal
hour !
O, wait, my love, till day !"

"Look here, look here—the moon shines
clear—
Full fast I ween we ride :
Mount and away ! for ere the day
We reach our bridal bed.

"The black barb snorts, the bridle
rings ;
Haste, busk, and bouné, and seat thee !
The feast is made, the chamber spread,
The bridal guests await thee."

Strong love prevailed : she busks, she
bounes,
She mounts the barb behind,
And round her darling William's waist
Her lily arms she twined.

And, hurry ! hurry ! off they rode,
As fast as fast might be ;
Spurned from the courser's thundering
heels
The flashing pebbles flee.

And on the right and on the left,
Ere they could snatch a view,
Fast, fast each mountain, mead, and
plain,
And cot and castle flew.

"Sit fast—dost fear ?—The moon shines
clear—
Fleet goes my barb—keep hold !
Fear'st thou ?"—"O no !" she faintly
said ;
"But why so stern and cold ?"

"What yonder rings ? what yonder
sings ?
Why shrieks the owlet gray ?"
"Tis death-bell's clang, 'tis funeral
song,
The body to the clay."

"With song and clang at morrow's dawn
Ye may inter the dead :
To-night I ride with my young bride
To deck our bridal bed.

"Come with thy choir, thou coffined guest,
To swell our nuptial song !
Come, priest, to bless our marriage feast !
Come all, come all along ! "

Ceased clang and song ; down sunk the bier ;
The shrouded corpse arose :
And hurry ! hurry ! all the train
The thundering steed pursues.

And forward ! forward ! on they go ;
High snorts the straining steed ;
Thick pants the rider's laboring breath,
As headlong on they speed.

"O William, why this savage haste !
And where thy bridal bed ?"
"Tis distant far, low, damp, and chill,
And narrow, trustless maid."

"No room for me ?"—"Enough for both ;—
Speed, speed, my barb, thy course !"
O'er thundering bridge, through boiling surge,
He drove the furious horse.

Tramp ! tramp ! along the land they rode,
Splash ! splash ! along the sea ;
The scourge is wight, the spur is bright,
The flashing pebbles flee.

Fled past on right and left how fast
Each forest, grove, and bower !
On right and left fled past how fast
Each city, town, and tower !

"Dost fear ? dost fear ? The moon shines clear,
Dost fear to ride with me ?—
Hurrah ! hurrah ! the dead can ride !"—
"O William, let them be !—"

"See there, see there ! What yonder swings
And creaks, mid whistling rain ?"—
"Gibbet and steel, the accursed wheel ;
A murderer in his chain.—"

"Hollo ! thou felon, follow here :
To bridal bed we ride ;
And thou shalt prance a fetter dance
Before me and my bride."

And, hurry ! hurry ! clash, clash, clash !
The wasted form descends ;
And fleet as wind through hazel bush
The wild career attends.

Tramp ! tramp ! along the land they rode,
Splash ! splash ! along the sea ;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee.

How fled what moonshine faintly showed !
How fled what darkness hid !
How fled the earth beneath their feet,
The Heaven above their head !

"Dost fear ? dost fear ? The moon shines clear,
And well the dead can ride ;
Dost, faithful Helen, fear for them ?"—
"O leave in peace the dead !"—

"Barb ! Barb ! methinks I hear the cock,
The sand will soon be run :
Barb ! Barb ! I smell the morning air ;
The race is well-nigh done."

Tramp ! tramp ! along the land they rode,
Splash ! splash ! along the sea ;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,
The flashing pebbles flee.

"Hurrah ! hurrah ! well ride the dead ;
The bride, the bride is come ;
And soon we reach the bridal bed,
For, Helen, here's my home."

Reluctant on its rusty hinge
Revolved an iron door,
And by the pale moon's setting beam
Were seen a church and tower.

With many a shriek and cry whiz round
The birds of midnight scared ;
And rustling like autumnal leaves
Unhallowed ghosts were heard.

O'er many a tomb and tombstone pale
He spurred the fiery horse,
Till suddenly at an open grave
He checked the wondrous course.

The falling gauntlet quits the rein,
Down drops the casque of steel,
The cuirass leaves his shrinking side,
The spur his gory heel.

The eyes desert the naked skull,
The mouldering flesh the bone,
Till Helen's lily arms entwine
A ghastly skeleton.

The furious barb snorts fire and foam,
And with a fearful bound
Dissolves at once in empty air,
And leaves her on the ground.

Half seen by fits, by fits half heard,
Pale spectres flit along,
Wheel round the maid in dismal dance,
And howl the funeral song;

"E'en when the heart's with anguish
cleft
Revere the doom of Heaven,
Her soul is from her body reft;
Her spirit be forgiven!"

1795. 1796.

THE VIOLET

See Lockhart's life of Scott, Vol I. Chapter 8, and the Century Magazine, July, 1899.

THE violet in her green-wood bower,
Where birchen boughs with hazels
mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen or copse or forest dingle.

Though fair her gems of azure hue,
Beneath the dewdrop's weight reclining;

I've seen an eye of lovelier blue,
More sweet through watery lustre
shining.

The summer sun that dew shall dry
Ere yet the day be past its morrow,
Nor longer in my false love's eye
Remained the tear of parting sorrow.

1797. 1810.

TO A LADY

WITH FLOWERS FROM A ROMAN WALL

TAKE these flowers which, purple waving,
On the ruined rampart grew,
Where, the sons of freedom braving,
Rome's imperial standards flew.

Warriors from the breach of danger
Pluck no longer laurels there;
They but yield the passing stranger
Wild-flower wreaths for Beauty's
hair. 1797.

THE EVE OF SAINT JOHN

THE Baron of Smaylho'me rose with
day,
He spurred his courser on,
Without stop or stay, down the rocky
way,
That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buccleuch
His banner broad to rear;
He went not 'gainst the English yew
To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack was braced and his
helmet was laced,
And his vaunt-brace of proof he wore;
At his saddle-gerthe was a good steel
sperthe,
Full ten pound weight and more.

The baron returned in three days' space
And his looks were sad and sour;
And weary was his courser's pace
As he reached his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram Moor
Ran red with English blood;
Where the Douglas true and the bold
Buccleuch
'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hacked and hewed,
His action pierced and tore,
His axe and his dagger with blood im-
bued,—
But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,
He held him close and still;
And he whistled thrice for his little
foot-page,
His name was English Will.

"Come thou hither, my little foot-page,
Come hither to my knee;
Though thou art young and tender of
age,
I think thou art true to me.

"Come, tell me all that thou hast seen,
And look thou tell me true!
Since I from Smaylho'me tower have
been,
What did thy lady do?"

"My lady, each night, sought the lonely
light
That burns on the wild Watchfold;
For from height to height the beacons
bright
Of the English foemen told.

"The bittern clamored from the moss,
The wind blew loud and shrill;
Yet the craggy pathway she did cross
To the airy Beacon Hill.

"I watched her steps, and silent came
Where she sat her on a stone;—
No watchman stood by the dreary
flame,
It burned all alone.

"The second night I kept her in sight
Till to the fire she came,
And, by Mary's might! an armed
knight
Stood by the lonely flame.

"And many a word that warlike lord
Did speak to my lady there;
But the rain fell fast and loud blew the
blast,
And I heard not what they were.

"The third night there the sky was fair,
And the mountain-blast was still,
As again I watched the secret pair
On the lonesome Beacon Hill.

"And I heard her name the midnight
hour,
And name this holy eve;
And say, 'Come this night to thy
lady's bower;
Ask no bold baron's leave.

"He lifts his spear with the bold Buc-
clench;
His lady is all alone;
The door she 'll undo to her knight so
true
On the eve of good Saint John."

"I cannot come; I must not come;
I dare not come to thee;
On the eve of Saint John I must wan-
der alone:
In thy bower I may not be."

"Now, out on thee, faint-hearted
knight!
Thou shouldst not say me nay;
For the eve is sweet, and when lovers
meet
Is worth the whole summer's day.

"And I'll chain the blood-hound, and
the warder shall not sound,
And rushes shall be strewed on the
stair;
So, by the black rood-stone and by
holy Saint John,
I conjure thee, my love, to be there!"

"Though the blood-hound be mute and
the rush beneath my foot,
And the warder his bugle should not
blow,
Yet there sleepeth a priest in the
chamber to the east,
And my footstep he would know."

"O, fear not the priest who sleepeth to
the east,
For to Dryburgh the way he has ta'en;
And there to say mass, till three days do
pass,
For the soul of a knight that is
slayne."

"He turned him around and grimly he
frowned
Then he laughed right scornfully—
'He who says the mass-rite for the soul
of that knight
May as well say mass for me:

"At the lone midnight hour when bad
spirits have power
In thy chamber will I be.—'
With that he was gone and my lady left
alone,
And no more did I see."

Then changed, I trow, was that bold
baron's brow
From the dark to the blood-red high;
"Now, tell me the mien of the knight
thou hast seen,
For, by Mary, he shall die!"

"His arms shone full bright in the
beacon's red light;
His plume it was scarlet and blue;
On his shield was a hound in a silver
leash bound,
And his crest was a branch of the
yew."

"Thou liest, thou liest, thou little foot-
page,
Loud dost thou lie to me!
For that knight is cold and low laid in
mould,
All under the Eildon-tree."

"Yet hear but my word, my noble lord !
For I heard her name his name ;
And that lady bright, she called the
knight
Sir Richard of Coldinghame."

The bold baron's brow then changed, I
trow,
From high blood-red to pale—
"The grave is deep and dark—and the
corpse is stiff and stark—
So I may not trust thy tale.

"Where fair Tweed flows round holy
Melrose,
And Eildon slopes to the plain,
Full three nights ago by some secret foe
That gay gallant was slain.

"The varying light deceived thy sight,
And the wild winds drowned the
name ;
For the Dryburgh bells ring and the
white monks do sing
For Sir Richard of Coldinghame !"

He passed the court-gate and he oped the
tower-gate,
And he mounted the narrow stair
To the bartizan-seat where, with maids
that on her wait,
He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood ;
Looked over hill and vale ;
Over Tweed's fair flood and Mertoun's
wood,
And all down Teviotdale.

"Now hail, now hail, thou lady bright !"
"Now hail, thou baron true !
What news, what news, from Ancram
fight ?
What news from the bold Buccleuch !"

"The Ancram moor is red with gore,
For many a Southern fell ;
And Buccleuch has charged us evermore
To watch our beacons well."

The lady blushed red, but nothing she
said :
Nor added the baron a word :
Then she stepped down the stair to her
chamber fair,
And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourned, and the baron
tossed and turned,
And oft to himself he said,—

"The worms around him creep, and his
bloody grave is deep—
It cannot give up the dead !"

It was near the ringing of matin-bell,
The night was well-nigh done,
When a heavy sleep on that baron fell,
On the eve of good Saint John.

The lady looked through the chamber
fair,
By the light of a dying flame ;
And she was aware of a knight stood
there—
Sir Richard of Coldinghame !

"Alas ! away, away !" she cried,
"For the holy Virgin's sake !"
"Lady, I know who sleeps by thy side ;
But, lady, he will not awake.

"By Eildon-tree for long nights three
In bloody grave have I lain ;
The mass and the death-prayer are said
for me,
But, lady, they are said in vain.

"By the baron's brand, near Tweed's fair
strand,
Most foully slain I fell ;
And my restless sprite on the beacon's
height
For a space is doomed to dwell.

"At our trysting-place, for a certain
space,
I must wander to and fro ;
But I had not had power to come to thy
bower
Hadst thou not conjured me so."

Love mastered fear—her brow she
crossed ;
"How, Richard, hast thou sped ?
And art thou saved or art thou lost ?"
The vision shook his head !

"Who spilleth life shall forfeit life :
So bid thy lord believe :
That lawless love is guilt above,
This awful sign receive."

He laid his left palm on an oaken beam
His right upon her hand ;
The lady shrunk and fainting sunk,
For it scorched like a fiery brand.

The sable score of fingers four
Remains on that board impressed ;
And forevermore that lady wore
A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower
 Ne'er looks upon the sun;
 There is a monk in Melrose tower
 He speaketh word to none.

That nun who ne'er beholds the day,
 That monk who speaks to none—
 That nun was Smaylho'me's lady gay,
 That monk the bold baron.

1799. 1801.

CADYOW CASTLE

WHEN princely Hamilton's abode
 Ennobled Cadyow's Gothic towers,
 The song went round, the goblet flowed,
 And revel sped the laughing hours.

Then, thrilling to the harp's gay sound,
 So sweetly rung each vaulted wall,
 And echoed light the dancer's bound,
 As mirth and music cheered the hall.

But Cadyow's towers in ruins laid,
 And vaults by ivy mantled o'er,
 Thrill to the music of the shade,
 Or echo Evan's hoarser roar.

Yet still of Cadyow's faded fame
 You bid me tell a minstrel tale,
 And tune my harp of Border frame
 On the wild banks of Evandale.

For thou, from scenes of courtly pride,
 From pleasure's lighter scenes, canst
 turn,
 To draw oblivion's pall aside
 And mark the long-forgotten urn.

Then, noble maid! at thy command
 Again the crumbled halls shall rise;
 Lo! as on Evan's banks we stand,
 The past returns—the present flies.

Where with the rock's wood-covered side
 Were blended late the ruins green,
 Rise turrets in fantastic pride
 And feudal banners flaunt between:

Where the rude torrent's brawling course
 Was shagged with thorn and tangling
 sloe,
 The ashler buttress braves its force
 And ramparts frown in battled row.

'Tis night—the shade of keep and spire
 Obscurely dance on Evan's stream;
 And on the wave the warder's fire
 Is checkering the moonlight beam.

Fades slow their light; the east is gray:
 The weary warder leaves his tower;
 Steeds snort, uncoupled stag-hounds bay,
 And merry hunters quit the bower.

The drawbridge falls—they hurry out—
 Clatters each plank and swinging
 chain,
 As, dashing o'er, the jovial rout
 Urge the shy steed and slack the rein.

First of his troop, the chief rode on;
 His shouting merry-men throng be-
 hind;
 The steed of princely Hamilton
 Was fleetlier than the mountain wind.

From the thick copse the roebucks
 bound,
 The startled red-deer scuds the plain,
 For the hoarse bugle's warrior-sound
 Has roused their mountain haunts
 again.

Through the huge oaks of Evandale,
 Whose limbs a thousand years have
 worn,
 What sullen roar comes down the gale
 And drowns the hunter's pealing
 horn?

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase
 That roam in woody Caledon,
 Crashing the forest in his race,
 The Mountain Bull comes thundering
 on.

Fierce on the hunter's quivered band
 He rolls his eyes of swarthy glow,
 Spurs with black hoof and horn the
 sand,
 And tosses high his mane of snow.

Aimed well the chieftain's lance has
 flown;
 Struggling in blood the savage lies;
 His roar is sunk in hollow groan—
 Sound, merry huntsmen! sound the
 pryse!

'Tis noon—against the knotted oak
 The hunters rest the idle spear;
 Curls through the trees the slender
 smoke,
 Where yeomen dight the woodland
 cheer.

Proudly the chieftain marked his clan,
 On greenwood lap all careless thrown,

Yet missed his eye the boldest man
That bore the name of Hamilton.

"Why fills not Bothwellhaugh his place,
Still wont our weal and woe to share?
Why comes he not our sport to grace?
Why shares he not our hunter's fare?"

Stern Claud replied with darkening
face—

Gray Paisley's haughty lord was he—
"At merry feast or buxom chase
No more the warrior wilt thou see.

"Few suns have set since Woodhouselee
Saw Bothwellhaugh's bright goblets
foam,
When to his hearths in social glee
The war-worn soldier turned him
home.

"There, wan from her maternal throes,
His Margaret, beautiful and mild,
Sate in her bower, a pallid rose,
And peaceful nursed her new-born
child.

"O change accursed! past are those days;
False Murray's ruthless spoilers came,
And, for the hearth's domestic blaze,
Ascends destruction's volumed flame.

"What sheeted phantom wanders wild
Where mountain Eske through wood-
land flows,
Her arms enfold a shadowy child—
O! is it she, the pallid rose?

"The wildered traveller sees her glide,
And hears her feeble voice with awe—
'Revenge,' she cries, 'on Murray's
pride!
And woe for injured Bothwell-
haugh!'"

He ceased—and cries of rage and grief
Burst mingling from the kindred band,
And half arose the kindling chief,
And half unsheathed his Arran brand.

But who o'er bush, o'er stream and rock,
Rides headlong with resistless speed,
Whose bloody poniard's frantic stroke
Drives to the leap his jaded steed;

Whose cheek is pale, whose eyeballs
glare,
As one some visioned sight that saw,

Whose hands are bloody, loose his hair?—
'Tis he! 'tis he! 'tis Bothwellhaugh.

From gory selle and reeling steed
Sprung the fierce horseman with a
bound,
And, reeking from the recent deed,
He dashed his carbine on the ground.

Sternly he spoke—" 'Tis sweet to hear
In good greenwood the bugle blown,
But sweeter to Revenge's ear
To drink a tyrant's dying groan.

"Your slaughtered quarry proudly trode
At dawning morn o'er dale and down,
But prouder base-born Murray rode
Through old Linlithgow's crowded
town.

"From the wild Border's humbled side,
In haughty triumph marched he,
While Knox relaxed his bigot pride
And smiled the traitorous pomp to see.

"But can stern Power, with all his vaunt,
Or Pomp, with all her courtly glare,
The settled heart of Vengeance daunt,
Or change the purpose of Despair?"

"With hackbut bent, my secret stand,
Dark as the purposed deed, I chose,
And marked where mingling in his band
Trooped Scottish pipes and English
bows.

"Dark Morton, girt with many a spear,
Murder's foul minion, led the van;
And clashed their broadswords in the
rear
The wild Macfarlanes' plaided clan.

"Glencairn and stout Parkhead were
nigh,
Obsequious at their Regent's rein,
And haggard Lindesay's iron eye,
That saw fair Mary weep in vain.

"Mid pennoned spears, a steely grove,
Proud Murray's plumage floated
high;
Scarce could his trampling charger move,
So close the minions crowded nigh.

"From the raised vizor's shade his eye,
Dark-rolling, glanced the ranks along,
And his steel truncheon, waved on high,
Seemed marshalling the iron throng.

"But yet his saddened brow confessed
A passing shade of doubt and awe;
Some fiend was whispering in his breast,
"Beware of injured Bothwellhaugh!"

"The death-shot parts! the charger
springs;
Wild rises tumult's startling roar!
And Murray's plummy helmet rings—
Rings on the ground to rise no more.

"What joy the raptured youth can feel,
To hear her love the loved one tell—
Or he who broaches on his steel
The wolf by whom his infant fell.

"But dearer to my injured eye
To see in dust proud Murray roll;
And mine was ten times trebled joy
To hear him groan his felon soul.

"My Margaret's spectre glided near.
With pride her bleeding victim saw,
And shrieked in his death-deafened ear,
'Remember injured Bothwellhaugh!'

"Then speed thee, noble Chatlerault!
Spread to the wind thy bannered tree!
Each warrior bend his Clydesdale bow—
Murray is fallen and Scotland free!"

Vaults every warrior to his steed;
Loud bugles join their wild acclaim—
"Murray is fallen and Scotland freed!
Couch, Arran, couch thy spear of
flame!"

But see! the minstrel vision fails—
The glimmering spears are seen no
more;

The shouts of war die on the gales,
Or sink in Evan's lonely roar.

For the loud bugle pealing high,
The blackbird whistles down the vale,
And sunk in ivied ruins lie
The bannered towers of Evandale.

For chiefs intent on bloody deed,
And Vengeance shouting o'er the slain,
Lo! high-born Beauty rules the steed,
Or graceful guides the silken rein.

And long may Peace and Pleasure own
The maids who list the minstrel's tale;
Nor e'er a ruder guest be known
On the fair banks of Evandale!

1801. 1803.

W. THE MAID OF NEIDPATH

O, LOVERS' eyes are sharp to see,
And lovers' ears in hearing;
And love in life's extremity
Can lend an hour of cheering.
Disease had been in Mary's bower,
And slow decay from mourning,
Though now she sits on Neidpath's
tower
To watch her love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so bright,
Her form decayed by pining,
Till through her wasted hand at night
You saw the taper shining;
By fits, a sultry hectic hue
Across her cheek was flying;
By fits, so ashy pale she grew,
Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear
Seemed in her frame residing;
Before the watch-dog pricked his ear,
She heard her lover's riding;
Ere scarce a distant form was kenned,
She knew, and waved to greet him;
And o'er the battlement did bend,
As on the wing to meet him.

He came—he passed—an heedless gaze,
As o'er some stranger glancing;
Her welcome, spoke in faltering phrase,
Lost in his courser's prancing—
The castle arch, whose hollow tone
Returns each whisper spoken,
Could scarcely catch the feeble moan
Which told her heart was broken.

1306.

HUNTING SONG

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day,
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk and horse and hunting
spear!
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain gray,
Sprinklets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming;
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the green-wood haste away;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size;
We can show the marks he made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers frayed;
You shall see him brought to bay,
"Waken, lords and ladies gay."

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth and mirth and glee
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman, who can balk,
Stanch as hound and fleet as hawk?
Think of this and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay. 1808

MARMION

W.

A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD

See Lockhart's Life of Scott, Vol. III, Chap. 16.

CANTO FIRST

THE CASTLE

DAY set on Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountains lone;
The battled towers, the donjon keep,
The loophole grates where captives

weep,
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone.
The warriors on the turrets high,
Moving athwart the evening sky,
Seemed forms of giant height;
Their armor, as it caught the rays,
Flashed back again the western blaze,
In lines of dazzling light.

Saint George's banner, broad and gay,
Now faded, as the fading ray
Less bright, and less, was flung;
The evening gale had scarce the power
To wave it on the donjon tower,
So heavily it hung.

The scouts had parted on their search,
The castle gates were barred;
Above the gloomy portal arch,
Timing his footsteps to a march,
The warder kept his guard,
Low humming, as he paced along,
Some ancient Border gathering song.

A distant trampling sound he hears;
He looks abroad, and soon appears,
O'er Horncliff-hill, a plump of spears
Beneath a pennon gay;
A horseman, darting from the crowd
Like lightning from a summer cloud,
Spurs on his mettled courser proud,
Before the dark array.

Beneath the sable palisade
That closed the castle barricade,
His bugle-horn he blew;
The warder hasted from the wall,
And warned the captain in the hall,
For well the blast he knew;
And joyfully that knight did call
To sewer, squire, and seneschal.

"Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,
Bring pasties of the doe,
And quickly make the entrance free,
And bid my heralds ready be,
And every minstrel sound his glee,
And all our trumpets blow;
And, from the platform, spare ye not
To fire a noble salvo-shot;
Lord Marmion wait's below!"
Then to the castle's lower ward
Sped forty yeomen tall,
The iron-studded gates unbarred,
Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,
The lofty palisade unsparred,
And let the drawbridge fall.

Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,
Proudly his red-roan charger trode,
His helm hung at the saddle bow;
Well by his visage you might know
He was a stalworth knight and keen,
And had in many a battle been;
The scar on his brown cheek revealed
A token true of Bosworth field;
His eyebrow dark and eye of fire
Showed spirit proud and prompt to ire,
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek
Did deep design and counsel speak.
His forehead, by his casque worn bare,
His thick moustache and curly hair,
Coal-black, and grizzled here and there,
But more through toil than age,

His square-turned joints and strength of limb,
Showed him no carpet knight so trim,
But in close fight a champion grim,
In camps a leader sage.

Well was he armed from head to heel,
In mail and plate of Milan steel;
But his strong helm, of mighty cost,
Was all with burnished gold embossed.
Amid the plumage of the crest
A falcon hovered on her nest,
With wings outspread and forward breast;

E'en such a falcon, on his shield,
Soared sable in an azure field:
The golden legend bore aright,
"Who checks at me, to death is dight."
Blue was the charger's broided rein;
Blue ribbons decked his arching mane;
The knightly housing's ample fold
Was velvet blue and trapped with gold.

Behind him rode two gallant squires,
Of noble name and knightly sires:
They burned the gilded spurs to claim,
For well could each a war-horse tame,
Could draw the bow, the sword could sway,

And lightly bear the ring away;
Nor less with courteous precepts stored,
Could dance in hall, and carve at board,
And frame love-ditties passing rare,
And sing them to a lady fair.

Four men-at-arms came at their backs,
With halbert, bill, and battle-axe;
They bore Lord Marmion's lance so strong

And led his sumpter-mules along,
And ambling palfrey, when at need
Him listed ease his battle-steed.
The last and truest of the four
On high his forky pennon bore;
Like swallow's tail in shape and hue,
Fluttered the streamer glossy blue,
Where, blazoned sable, as before,
The towering falcon seemed to soar.
Last, twenty yeomen, two and two
In hosen black and jerkins blue,
With falcons broided on each breast,
Attended on their lord's behest.
Each, chosen for an archer good,
Knew hunting-craft by lake or wood;
Each one a six-foot bow could bend,
And far a cloth-yard shaft could send;
Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,
And at their belts their quivers rung.
Their dusty palfreys and array
Showed they had marched a weary way.

'Tis meet that I should tell you now,
How fairly armed, and ordered how,
The soldiers of the guard,
With musket, pike, and morion,
To welcome noble Marmion,
Stood in the castle-yard;
Minstrels and trumpeters were there,
The gunner held his linstock yare,
For welcome-shot prepared:
Entered the train, and such a clang
As then through all his turrets rang
Old Norham never heard.

The guards their morrice-pikes advanced,
The trumpets flourished brave,
The cannon from the ramparts glanced,
And thundering welcome gave.
A blithe salute, in martial sort,
The minstrels well might sound,
For, as Lord Marmion crossed the court,
He scattered angels round.
"Welcome to Norham, Marmion!
Stout heart and open hand!
Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan,
Thou flower of English land!"

Two pursuivants, whom tabards deck,
With silver scutcheon round their neck,
Stood on the steps of stone
By which you reach the donjon gate,
And there, with herald pomp and state,
They hailed Lord Marmion:
They hailed him Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye,
Of Tamworth tower and town;
And he, their courtesy to requite,
Gave them a chain of twelve marks weight,

All as he lighted down.
"Now, largesse, largesse, Lord Marmion,
Knight of the crest of gold!
A blazoned shield, in battle won,
Ne'er guarded heart so bold."

They marshalled him to the castle-hall,
Where the guests stood all aside,
And loudly flourished the trumpet-call,
And the heralds loudly cried,—
"Room, lordlings, room for Lord Marmion,

With the crest and helm of gold!
Full well we know the trophies won
In the lists at Cottiswold:
There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove
'Gainst Marmion's force to stand;
To him he lost his lady-love,
And to the king his land.
Ourselves beheld the listed field,
A sight both sad and fair;

We saw Lord Marmion pierce his shield,
 And saw his saddle bare ;
 We saw the victor win the crest
 He wears with worthy pride,
 And on the gibbet-tree, reversed,
 His foeman's scutcheon tied.
 Place, nobles, for the Falcon-Knight !
 Room, room, ye gentles gay.
 For him who conquered in the right,
 Marmion of Fontenaye ! "

Then stepped, to meet that noble lord,
 Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
 Baron of Twisell and of Ford,
 And Captain of the Hold ;
 He led Lord Marmion to the deas,
 Raised o'er the pavement high,
 And placed him in the upper place—
 They feasted full and high :

The whiles a Northern harper rude
 Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,
 " How the fierce Thirwalls, and Rid-
 leys all,
 Stout Willimondswick,
 And Hardriding Dick,
 And Hughie of Hawdon, and Will o'
 the Wall,

Have set on Sir Albany Featherston-
 haugh,
 And taken his life at the Dead-man's-
 shaw."

Scantly Lord Marmion's ear could
 brook
 The harper's barbarous lay,
 Yet whiles he praised the pains he took,
 And well those pains did pay ;
 For lady's suit and minstrel's strain
 By knight should ne'er be heard in vain.

" Now good Lord Marmion," Heron says,
 " Of your fair courtesy,

I pray you bide some little space
 In this poor tower with me.

Here may you keep your arms from rust,
 May breathe your war-horse well ;
 Seldom hath passed a week but joust
 Or feat of arms befell.

The Scots can rein a mettled steed,
 And love to couch a spear ;—
 Saint George ! a stirring life they lead
 That have such neighbors near !

Then stay with us a little space,
 Our Northern wars to learn ;
 I pray you for your lady's grace ! "

Lord Marmion's brow grew stern.

The Captain marked his altered look,
 And gave the squire the sign ;
 A mighty wassail-bowl he took,

And crowned it high with wine.
 " Now pledge me here, Lord Marmion ;
 But first I pray thee fair,
 Where hast thou left that page of thine
 That used to serve thy cup of wine,
 Whose beauty was so rare ?
 When last in Raby-towers we met,
 The boy I closely eyed,
 And often marked his cheeks were wet
 With tears he fain would hide.
 His was no rugged horse-boy's hand,
 To burnish shield or sharpen brand,
 Or saddle battle-steed,
 But meeter seemed for lady fair,
 To fan her cheek, or curl her hair,
 Or through embroidery, rich and rare,
 The slender silk to lead ;
 His skin was fair, his ringlets gold,
 His bosom—when he sighed,
 The russet doublet's rugged fold
 Could scarce repel its pride !
 Say, hast thou given that lovely youth
 To serve in lady's bower ?
 Or was the gentle page, in sooth,
 A gentle paramour ? "

Lord Marmion ill could brook such jest ;
 He rolled his kindling eye,
 With pain his rising wrath suppressed,
 Yet made a calm reply ;
 " That boy thou thought so goodly fair,
 He might not brook the Northern air.
 More of his fate if thou wouldst learn,
 I left him sick in Lindisfarne.
 Enough of him.—But, Heron, say,
 Why does thy lovely lady gay
 Disdain to grace the hall to-day ?
 Or has that dame, so fair and sage,
 Gone on some pious pilgrimage ?"—
 He spoke in covert scorn, for fame
 Whispered light tales of Heron's dame.

Unmarked, at least unrecked, the taunt,
 Careless the knight replied :
 " No bird whose feathers gaily flaunt
 Delights in cage to bide ;
 Norham is grim and grated close,
 Hemmed in by battlement and fosse,
 And many a darksome tower,
 And better loves my lady bright
 To sit in liberty and light

In fair Queen Margaret's bower.
 We hold our greyhound in our hand,
 Our falcon on our glove,
 But where shall we find leash or band
 For dame that loves to rove ?
 Let the wild falcon soar her swing.
 She 'll stoop when she has tried her
 wing."

"Nay, if with Royal James's bride
The lovely Lady Heron bide,
Behold me here a messenger,
Your tender greetings prompt to bear ;
For, to the Scottish court addressed,
I journey at our king's behest,
And pray you, of your grace, provide
For me and mine a trusty guide.
I have not ridden in Scotland since
James backed the cause of that mock
prince,
Warbeck, that Flemish counterfeit,
Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
Then did I march with Surrey's power,
What time we razed old Ayton tower."—

"For such-like need, my lord, I trow,
Norham can find you guides enow ;
For here be some have pricked as far
On Scottish grounds as to Dunbar,
Have drunk the monks of Saint
Bethan's ale,
And driven the beeves of Lauderdale,
Harried the wives of Greenlaw's goods,
And given them light to set their
hoods."

"Now, in good sooth," Lord Marmion
cried,
"Were I in warlike-wise to ride,
A better guard I would not lack
Than your stout prayers at my back ;
But as in form of peace I go,
A friendly messenger, to know,
Why, through all Scotland, near and
far,
Their king is mustering troops for war,
The sight of plundering Border spears
Might justify suspicious fears,
And deadly feud or thirst of spoil
Break out in some unseemly broil.
A herald were my fitting guide ;
Or friar, sworn in peace to bide ;
Or pardoner, or travelling priest,
Or strolling pilgrim, at the least."

The Captain mused a little space,
And passed his hand across his face.—
"Pain would I find the guide you want,
But ill may spare a pursuivant.
The only men that safe can ride
Mine errands on the Scottish side :
And though a bishop built this fort,
Few holy brethren here resort ;
Even our good chaplain, as I ween,
Since our last siege we have not seen,
The mass he might not sing or say
Upon one stinted meal a day ;
So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,

And prayed for our success the while.
Our Norham vicar, woe betide,
Is all too well in case to ride ;
The priest of Shoreswood—he could rein
The wildest war-horse in your train,
But then no spearman in the hall
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.
Friar John of Tillmouth were the man ;
A blithesome brother at the can,
A welcome guest in hall and bower,
He knows each castle, town, and tower,
In which the wine and ale is good,
Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.
But that good man, as ill befalls,
Hath seldom left our castle walls,
Since, on the vigil of Saint Bede,
In evil hour he crossed the Tweed,
To teach Dame Alison her creed.
Old Bughtrig found him with his wife,
And John, an enemy to strife,
Sans frock and hood, fled for his life.
The jealous churl hath deeply sworn
That, if again he venture o'er
He shall shrieve penitent no more.
Little he loves such risks, I know,
Yet in your guard perchance will go."

Young Selby, at the fair hall-board,
Carved to his uncle and that lord,
And reverently took up the word :
"Kind uncle, woe were we each one,
If harm should hap to brother John.
He is a man of mirthful speech.
Can many a game and gambol teach ;
Full well at tables can he play,
And sweep at bowls the stake away.
None can a lustier carol bawl,
The needfullest among us all,
When time hangs heavy in the hall,
And snow comes thick at Christmas
tide,
And we can neither hunt nor ride
A foray on the Scottish side.
The vowed revenge of Bughtrig rude
May end in worse than loss of hood,
Let friar John in safety still
In chimney-corner snore his fill,
Roast hissing crabs, or flagons swill ;
Last night, to Norham there came one
Will better guide Lord Marmion."—
"Nephew," quoth Heron, "by my fay,
Well hast thou spoke ; say forth thy
say."—

"Here is a holy Palmer come,
From Salem first, and last from Rome ;
One that hath kissed the blessed tomb,
And visited each holy shrine
In Araby and Palestine ;

On hills of Armenie hath been,
Where Noah's ark may yet be seen;
By that Red Sea, too, hath he trod,
Which parted at the Prophet's rod;
In Sinai's wilderness he saw
The Mount where Israel heard the law,
Mid thunder-dint, and flashing levin,
And shadows, mists, and darkness,
given.

He shows Saint James's cockle-shell,
Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell;
And of that Grot where Olives nod,
Where, darling of each heart and eye,
From all the youth of Sicily,
Saint Rosalie retired to God.

"To stout Saint George of Norwich
merry,
Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,
Cuthbert of Durham and Saint Bede,
For his sins' pardon hath he prayed.
He knows the passes of the North,
And seeks far shrines beyond the Forth;
Little he eats, and long will wake,
And drinks but of the stream or lake.
This were a guide o'er moor and dale;
But when our John hath quaffed his ale,
As little as the wind that blows,
And warms itself against his nose,
Kens he, or cares, which way he goes."—

"Gramercy!" quoth Lord Marmion,
"Full loath were I that Friar John,
That venerable man, for me
Were placed in fear or jeopardy;
If this same Palmer will me lead
From hence to Holy-Rood,
Like his good saint, I'll pay his meed,
Instead of cockle-shell or bead,
With angels fair and good.
I love such holy rambles; still
They know to charm a weary hill
With song, romance, or lay:
Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,
Some lying legend, at the least,
They bring to cheer the way."—

"Ah! noble sir," young Selby said,
And finger on his lip he laid,
"This man knows much, perchance e'en
more
Than he could learn by holy lore.
Still to himself he's muttering,
And shrinks as at some unseen thing.
Last night we listened at his cell;
Strange sounds we heard, and, sooth to
tell,
He murmured on till morn, howe'er
No living mortal could be near.

Sometimes I thought I heard it plain,
As other voices spoke again.
I cannot tell—I like it not—
Friar John hath told us it is wrote,
No conscience clear and void of wrong
Can rest awake and pray so long.
Himself still sleeps before his beads
Have marked ten aves and two
creeds."—

"Let pass," quoth Marmion; "by my
fay,

This man shall guide me on my way,
Although the great arch-fiend and he
Had sworn themselves of company.
So please you, gentle youth, to call
This Palmer to the castle-hall."
The summoned Palmer came in place:
His sable cowl o'erhung his face;
In his black mantle was he clad,
With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,
On his broad shoulders wrought;
The scallop shell his cap did deck;
The crucifix around his neck
Was from Loretto brought;
His sandals were with travel tore.
Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he wore;
The faded palm-branch in his hand
Showed pilgrim from the Holy Land.

When as the Palmer came in hall,
Nor lord nor knight was there more tall,
Or had a statelier step withal,
Or looked more high and keen;
For no saluting did he wait,
But strode across the hall of state,
And fronted Marmion where he sate,
As he his peer had been.
But his gaunt frame was worn with
toil;
His cheek was sunk, alas the while!
And when he struggled at a smile
His eye looked haggard wild:
Poor wretch, the mother that him bare,
If she had been in presence there,
In his wan face and sunburnt hair
She had not known her child.
Danger, long travel, want, or woe,
Soon change the form that best we
know—
For deadly fear can time outgo,
And blanch at once the hair;
Hard toil can roughen form and face,
And want can quench the eye's bright
grace,
Nor does old age a wrinkle trace
More deeply than despair.
Happy whom none of these befall,
But this poor Palmer knew them all.

Lord Marmion then his boon did ask ;
 The Palmer took on him the task,
 So he would march with morning tide,
 To Scottish court to be his guide.
 " But I have solemn vows to pay,
 And may not linger by the way,
 To fair Saint Andrew's bound,
 Within the ocean-cave to pray,
 Where good Saint Rule his holy lay,
 From midnight to the dawn of day,
 Sung to the billows' sound ;
 Thence to Saint Fillan's blessed well,
 Whose spring can frenzied dreams dispel
 And the crazed brain restore.
 Saint Mary grant that cave or spring
 Could back to peace my bosom bring,
 Or bid it throb no more ! "

And now the midnight draught of sleep,
 Where wine and spices richly steep,
 In massive bowl of silver deep,
 The page presents on knee.
 Lord Marmion drank a fair good rest,
 The Captain pledged his noble guest,
 The cup went through among the rest,
 Who drained it merrily ;
 Alone the Palmer passed it by,
 Though Selby pressed him courteously.
 This was a sign the feast was o'er ;
 It hushed the merry wassail roar,
 The minstrels ceased to sound.
 Soon in the castle nought was heard
 But the slow footstep of the guard
 Pacing his sober round.

With early dawn Lord Marmion rose :
 And first the chapel doors unclose ;
 Then, after morning rites were done—
 A hasty mass from Friar John—
 And knight and squire had broke their
 fast

On rich substantial repast,
 Lord Marmion's bugle blew to horse.
 Then came the stirrup-cup in course :
 Between the baron and his host,
 No point of courtesy was lost ;
 High thanks were by Lord Marmion paid,
 Solemn excuse the Captain made,
 Till, filing from the gate, had passed
 That noble train, their lord the last.
 Then loudly rung the trumpet call ;
 Thundered the cannon from the wall,
 And shook the Scottish shore ;
 Around the castle eddied slow
 Volumes of smoke as white as snow
 And hid its turrets hoar,
 Till they rolled forth upon the air,
 And met the river breezes there,
 Which gave again the prospect fair.

CANTO SECOND

THE CONVENT

THE breeze which swept away the smoke
 Round Norham Castle rolled,
 When all the loud artillery spoke
 With lightning-flash and thunder-stroke,
 As Marmion left the Hold.—
 It curled not Tweed alone, that breeze,
 For, far upon Northumbrian seas,
 It freshly blew and strong,
 Where, from high Whitby's cloistered
 pile,
 Bound to Saint Cuthbert's Holy Isle,
 It bore a bark along.
 Upon the gale she stooped her side,
 And bounded o'er the swelling tide,
 As she were dancing home ;
 The merry seamen laughed to see
 Their gallant ship so lustily
 Furrow the green sea-foam.
 Much joyed they in their honored
 freight ;
 For, on the deck, in chair of state,
 The Abbess of Saint Hilda placed,
 With five fair nuns, the galley graced.

" 'T was sweet to see these holy maids,
 Like birds escaped to greenwood shades,
 Their first flight from the cage,
 How timid, and how curious too,
 For all to them was strange and new,
 And all the common sights they view
 Their wonderment engage.
 One eyed the shrouds and swelling sail,
 With many a benedicite ;
 One at the rippling surge grew pale,
 And would for terror pray,
 Then shrieked because the sea-dog nigh
 His round black head and sparkling eye
 Reared o'er the foaming spray ;
 And one would still adjust her veil
 Disordered by the summer gale,
 Perchance lest some more worldly eye
 Her dedicated charms might spy,
 Perchance because such action graced
 Her fair-turned arm and slender waist.
 Light was each simple bosom there,
 Save two, who ill might pleasure share,—
 The Abbess and the Novice Clare.

The Abbess was of noble blood,
 But early took the veil and hood,
 Ere upon life she cast a look,
 Or knew the world that she forsook.
 Fair too she was, and kind had been
 As she was fair, but ne'er had seen
 For her a timid lover sigh,
 Nor knew the influence of her eye.

Love to her ear was but a name,
 Combined with vanity and shame ;
 Her hopes, her fears, her joys, were all
 Bounded within the cloister wall ;
 The deadliest sin her mind could reach
 Was of monastic rule the breach,
 And her ambition's highest aim
 To emulate Saint Hilda's fame.
 For this she gave her ample dower
 To raise the convent's eastern tower ;
 For this, with carving rare and quaint,
 She decked the chapel of the saint,
 And gave the relic-shrine of cost,
 With ivory and gems embossed.
 The poor her convent's bounty blest,
 The pilgrim in its halls found rest.

Black was her garb, her rigid rule
 Reformed on Benedictine school ;
 Her cheek was pale, her form was spare ;
 Vigils and penitence austere
 Had early quenched the light of youth :
 But gentle was the dame, in sooth ;
 Though, vain of her religious sway,
 She loved to see her maids obey,
 Yet nothing stern was she in cell,
 And the nuns loved their Abbess well.
 Sad was this voyage to the dame ;
 Summoned to Lindisfarne, she came,
 There, with Saint Cuthbert's Abbot old
 And Tynemouth's Prioress, to hold
 A chapter of Saint Benedict.
 For inquisition stern and strict
 On two apostates from the faith,
 And, if need were, to doom to death.

Nought say I here of Sister Clare,
 Save this, that she was young and fair ;
 As yet a novice unprofessed,
 Lovely and gentle, but distressed,
 She was betrothed to one now dead,
 Or worse, who had dishonored fled.
 Her kinsmen bade her give her hand
 To one who loved her for her land ;
 Herself, almost heart-broken now,
 Was bent to take the vestal vow,
 And shroud within Saint Hilda's gloom
 Her blasted hopes and withered bloom.

She sate upon the galley's prow,
 And seemed to mark the waves below ;
 Nay, seemed, so fixed her look and eye,
 To count them as they glided by :
 She saw them not—'t was seeming all—
 Far other scene her thoughts recall—,
 A sun-scorched desert, waste and bare ;
 Nor waves nor breezes murmured there ;
 There saw she where some careless hand
 O'er a dead corpse had heaped the sand,

To hide it till the jackals come
 To tear it from the scanty tomb.—
 See what a woful look was given,
 As she raised up her eyes to heaven !

Lovely, and gentle, and distressed—
 These charms might tame the fiercest
 breast :

Harpers have sung and poets told
 That he, in fury uncontrolled,
 The shaggy monarch of the wood,
 Before a virgin, fair and good,
 Hath pacified his savage mood.
 But passions in the human frame
 Oft put the lion's rage to shame ;
 And jealousy, by dark intrigue,
 With sordid avarice in league,
 Had practised with their bowl and knife
 Against the mourner's harmless life.
 This crime was charged against those
 who lay
 Prisoned in Cuthbert's islet gray.

And now the vessel skirts the strand
 Of mountainous Northumberland ;
 Towns, towers, and halls successive rise,
 And catch the nuns' delighted eyes.
 Monk-Wearmouth soon behind them lay,
 And Tynemouth's priory and bay ;
 They marked amid her trees the hall
 Of lofty Seaton-Delaval ;
 They saw the Blythe and Wausbeck
 floods

Rush to the sea through sounding
 woods ;

They passed the tower of Widderington,
 Mother of many a valiant son ;
 At Coquet-isle their beads they tell
 To the good saint who owned the cell ;
 Then did the Alne attention claim,
 And Warkworth, proud of Percy's
 name ;

And next they crossed themselves to
 hear

The whitening breakers sound so near,
 Where, boiling through the rocks, they
 roar

On Dunstanborough's caverned shore ;
 Thy tower, proud Bamborough, marked
 they there,

King Ida's castle, huge and square,
 From its tall rock look grimly down,
 And on the swelling ocean frown ;
 Then from the coast they bore away
 And reached the Holy Island's bay.

The tide did now its flood-mark gain
 And girdled in the Saint's domain ;
 For, with the flow and ebb, its style

Varies from continent to isle :
 Dry shod, o'er sands, twice every day
 The pilgrims to the shrine find way ;
 Twice every day the waves efface
 Of staves and sandalled feet the trace.
 As to the port the galley flew,
 Higher and higher rose to view
 The castle with its battled walls,
 The ancient monastery's halls,
 A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,
 Placed on the margin of the isle.

In Saxon strength that abbey frowned,
 With massive arches broad and round,
 That rose alternate, row and row,
 On ponderous columns, short and low,
 Built ere the art was known,
 By pointed aisle and shafted stalk
 The arcades of an alleyed walk
 To emulate in stone.

On the deep walls the heathen Dane
 Had poured his impious rage in vain ;
 And needful was such strength to these,
 Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
 Scourged by the winds' eternal sway,
 Open to rovers fierce as they,
 Which could twelve hundred years with-
 stand

Winds, waves, and northern pirates'
 hand.

Not but that portions of the pile,
 Rebuilt in a later style,
 Showed where the spoiler's hand had
 been ;

Not but the wasting sea-breeze keen
 Had worn the pillar's carving quaint,
 And mouldered in his niche the saint,
 And rounded with consuming power
 The pointed angles of each tower ;
 Yet still entire the abbey stood,
 Like veteran, worn, but unsubdued.

Soon as they neared his turrets strong,
 The maidens raised Saint Hilda's song,
 And with the sea-wave and the wind
 Their voices, sweetly shrill, combined
 And made harmonious close ;

Then, answering from the sandy shore,
 Half-drowned amid the breakers' roar,
 According chorus rose :

Down to the haven of the Isle
 The monks and nuns in order file
 From Cuthbert's cloisters grim ;
 Banner, and cross, and relics there.
 To meet Saint Hilda's maids, they bare ;
 And, as they caught the sounds on air,

They echoed back the hymn.
 The islanders in joyous mood
 Rushed emulously through the flood

To hale the bark to land ;
 Conspicuous by her veil and hood,
 Signing the cross, the Abbess stood,
 And blessed them with her hand.

Suppose we now the welcome said,
 Suppose the convent banquet made :

All through the holy dome,
 Through cloister, aisle, and gallery,
 Wherever vestal maid might pry,
 Nor risk to meet unhallowed eye,
 The stranger sisters roam ;

Till fell the evening damp with dew,
 And the sharp sea-breeze coldly blew,
 For there even summer night is chill.
 Then, having strayed and gazed their fill,

They closed around the fire ;
 And all, in turn, essayed to paint
 The rival merits of their saint,
 A theme that ne'er can tire
 A holy maid, for be it known
 That their saint's honor is their own.

Then Whitby's nuns exulting told
 How to their house three barons bold
 Must menial service do,
 While horns blow out a note of shame,
 And monks cry, "Fie upon your name !

In wrath, for loss of sylvan game,
 Saint Hilda's priest ye slew."—
 "Thus, on Ascension-day, each year
 While laboring on our harbor-pier,
 Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear."
 They told how in their convent-cell
 A Saxon princess once did dwell,

The lovely Edel fled ;
 And how, of thousand snakes, each one
 Was changed into a coil of stone

When holy Hilda prayed ;
 Themselves, within their holy bound,
 Their stony folds had often found.
 They told how sea-fowls' pinions fail
 As over Whitby's towers they sail,
 And, sinking down, with flutterings
 faint,

They do their homage to the saint.

Nor did Saint Cuthbert's daughters fail
 To vie with these in holy tale ;
 His body's resting-place, of old,
 How oft their patron changed, they told ;
 How, when the rude Dane burned their
 pile,

The monks fled forth from Holy Isle ;
 O'er northern mountain, marsh, and
 moor,

From sea to sea, from shore to shore,
 Seven years Saint Cuthbert's corpse they
 bore.

They rested them in fair Melrose ;
 But though, alive, he loved it well,
 Not there his relics might repose ;
 For, wondrous tale to tell !
 In his stone coffin forth he rides,
 A ponderous bark for river tides,
 Yet light as gossamer it glides
 Downward to Tilmouth cell.
 Nor long was his abiding there,
 For southward did the saint repair ;
 Chester-le-Street and Ripon saw
 His holy corpse ere Wardilaw
 Hailed him with joy and fear ;
 And, after many wanderings past,
 He chose his lordly seat at last
 Where his cathedral, huge and vast,
 Looks down upon the Wear.
 There, deep in Durham's Gothic shade,
 His relics are in secret laid ;
 But none may know the place,
 Save of his holiest servants three,
 Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,
 Who share that wondrous grace.

Who may his miracles declare ?
 Even Scotland's dauntless king and
 heir—

Although with them they led
 Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,
 And Loden's knights, all sheathed in
 mail,
 And the bold men of Teviotdale—
 Before his standard fled.
 'Twas he, to vindicate his reign,
 Edged Alfred's falchion on the Dane,
 And turned the Conqueror back again,
 When, with his Norman bowyer band,
 He came to waste Northumberland.

But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would learn
 If on a rock, by Lindisfarne,
 Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to frame
 The sea-born beads that bear his name :
 Such tales had Whitby's fishers told,
 And said they might his shape behold,
 And hear his anvil sound ;
 A deadened clang,—a huge dim form,
 Seen but, and heard, when gathering
 storm

And night were closing round.
 But this, as tale of idle fame,
 The nuns of Lindisfarne disclaim.

While round the fire such legends go,
 Far different was the scene of woe
 Where, in a secret aisle beneath,
 Council was held of life and death.

It was more dark and long, that vault,
 Than the worst dungeon cell ;

Old Colwulf built it, for his fault
 In penitence to dwell,
 When he for cowl and beads laid
 down

The Saxon battle-axe and crown.
 This den, which, chilling every sense
 Of feeling, hearing, sight,
 Was called the Vault of Penitence,
 Excluding air and light,
 Was by the prelate Sexhelm made
 A place of burial for such dead
 As, having died in mortal sin,
 Might not be laid the church within.
 'Twas now a place of punishment ;
 Whence if so loud a shriek were sent
 As reached the upper air,
 The hearers blessed themselves, and said
 The spirits of the sinful dead
 Bemoaned their torments there.

But though, in the monastic pile,
 Did of this penitential pile,
 Some vague tradition go,
 Few only, save the Abbot, knew
 Where the place lay, and still more few
 Were those who had from him the clew
 To that dread vault to go.
 Victim and executioner
 Were blindfold when transported there.
 In low dark rounds the arches hung,
 From the rude rock the side-walls sprung
 The gravestones, rudely sculptured o'er,
 Half sunk in earth, by time half wore,
 Were all the pavement of the floor ;
 The mildew drops fell one by one,
 With tinkling splash, upon the stone.
 A cresset, in an iron chain,
 Which served to light this drear domain,
 With damp and darkness seemed to
 strive,
 As if it scarce might keep alive ;
 And yet it dimly served to show
 The awful conclave met below.

There, met to doom in secrecy,
 Were placed the heads of convents three,
 All servants of Saint Benedict,
 The statutes of whose order strict
 On iron table lay ;
 In long black dress, on seats of stone,
 Behind were these three judges shown
 By the pale crescent's ray.
 The Abbess of Saint Hilda's there
 Sat for a space with visage bare,
 Until, to hide her bosom's swell,
 And tear-drops that for pity fell,
 She closely drew her veil ;
 Yon shrouded figure, as I guess,
 By her proud mien and flowing dress,

Is Tynemouth's haughty Prioress,
 And she with awe looks pale ;
 And he, that ancient man, whose sight
 Has long been quenched by age's night,
 Upon whose wrinkled brow alone
 Nor ruth nor mercy's trace is shown,
 Whose look is hard and stern,—
 Saint Cuthbert's Abbot is his style,
 For sanctity called through the isle
 The Saint of Lindisfarne.

Before them stood a guilty pair ;
 But, though an equal fate they share,
 Yet one alone deserves our care.
 Her sex a page's dress belied ;
 The cloak and doublet, loosely tied,
 Obscured her charms, but could not
 hide.

Her cap down o'er her face she drew ;
 And, on her doublet breast,
 She tried to hide the badge of blue,
 Lord Marmion's falcon crest.

But, at the prioress' command,
 A monk undid the silken band
 That tied her tresses fair,
 And raised the bonnet from her head,
 And down her slender form they spread
 In ringlets rich and rare.

Constance de Beverley they know,
 Sister professed of Fontevraud,
 Whom the Church numbered with the
 dead,

For broken vows and convent fled.

When thus her face was given to
 view,—

Although so pallid was her hue,
 It did a ghastly contrast bear
 To those bright ringlets glistening
 fair,—

Her look composed, and steady eye,
 Bespoke a matchless constancy ;
 And there she stood so calm and pale
 That, but her breathing did not fail,
 And motion slight of eye and head,
 And of her bosom, warranted
 That neither sense nor pulse she lacks,
 You might have thought a form of wax,
 Wrought to the very life, was there ;
 So still she was, so pale, so fair.

Her comrade was a sordid soul,
 Such as does murder for a meed ;
 Who, but of fear, knows no control,
 Because his conscience, seared and foul,
 Feels not the import of his deed ;
 One whose brute-feeling ne'er aspires
 Beyond his own more brute desires.
 Such tools the Tempter ever needs

To do the savagest of deeds ;
 For them no visioned terrors daunt,
 Their nights no fancied spectres haunt ;
 One fear with them, of all most base,
 The fear of death, alone finds place.
 This wretch was clad in frock and cowl,
 And shamed not loud to moan and howl,
 His body on the floor to dash,
 And crouch, like hound beneath the
 lash ;

While his mute partuer, standing near,
 Waited her doom without a tear.

Yet well the luckless wretch might
 shriek,

Well might her paleness terror speak !
 For there were seen in that dark wall
 Two niches, narrow, deep, and tall ;—
 Who enters at such grisly door
 Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.
 In each a slender meal was laid,
 Of roots, of water, and of bread ;
 By each, in Benedictine dress,
 Two haggard monks stood motionless,
 Who, holding high a blazing torch,
 Showed the grim entrance of the porch ;
 Reflecting back the smoky beam,
 The dark-red walls and arches gleam.
 Hewn stones and cement were dis-
 played,
 And building tools in order laid.

These executioners were chose,
 As men who were with mankind foes,
 And, with despite and envy fired,
 Into the cloister had retired,

Or who, in desperate doubt of grace,
 Strove by deep penance to efface
 Of some foul crime the stain ;
 For, as the vassals of her will,
 Such men the Church selected still
 As either joyed in doing ill,

Or thought more grace to gain
 If in her cause they wrestled down
 Feelings their nature strove to own.
 By strange device were they brought
 there,
 They knew not how, and knew not
 where.

And now that blind old abbot rose,
 To speak the Chapter's doom
 On those the wall was to enclose
 Alive within the tomb,
 But stopped because that woful maid,
 Gathering her powers, to speak essayed ;
 Twice she essayed, and twice in vain,
 Her accents might no utterance gain ;
 Nought but imperfect murmurs slip

From her convulsed and quivering lip ;
 'Twixt each attempt all was so still,
 You seemed to hear a distant rill—
 'T was ocean's swells and falls ;
 For though this vault of sin and fear
 Was to the sounding surge so near,
 A tempest there you scarce could hear,
 So massive were the walls.

At length, an effort sent apart
 The blood that curdled to her heart,
 And light came to her eye,
 And color dawned upon her cheek,
 A hectic and a fluttered streak,
 Like that left on the Cheviot peak
 By Autumn's stormy sky ;
 And when her silence broke at length,
 Still as she spoke she gathered strength,
 And armed herself to bear.
 It was a fearful sight to see
 Such high resolve and constancy
 In form so soft and fair.

"I speak not to implore your grace,
 Well know I for one minute's space
 Successless might I sue :
 Nor do I speak your prayers to gain ;
 For if a death of lingering pain
 To cleanse my sins be penance vain,
 Vain are your masses too.—
 I listened to a traitor's tale,
 I left the convent and the veil ;
 For three long years I bowed my pride,
 A horse-boy in his train to ride ;
 And well my folly's meed he gave,
 Who forfeited, to be his slave,
 All here, and all beyond the grave.
 He saw young Clara's face more fair,
 He knew her of broad lands the heir,
 Forgot his vows, his faith forswore,
 And Constance was beloved no more.
 'T is an old tale, and often told ;
 But did my fate and wish agree,
 Ne'er had been read, in story old,
 Of maiden true betrayed for gold,
 That loved, or was avenged, like me !

"The king approved his favorite's aim ;
 In vain a rival barred his claim.
 Whose fate with Clare's was plight,
 For he attains that rival's fame
 With treason's charge—and on they came
 In mortal lists to fight.
 Their oaths are said,
 Their prayers are prayed,
 Their lances in the rest are laid,
 They meet in mortal shock ;
 And hark ! the throng, with thundering
 cry,

Shout 'Marmion, Marmion ! to the sky
 De Wilton to the block !'
 Say, ye who preach Heaven shall decide
 When in the lists two champions ride,
 Say, was Heaven's justice here ?
 When, loyal in his love and faith,
 Wilton found overthrow or death
 Beneath a traitor's spear ?
 How false the charge, how true he fell,
 This guilty packet best can tell."
 Then drew a packet from her breast,
 Paused, gathered voice, and spoke the
 rest.

"Still was false Marmion's bridal stayed ;
 To Whitby's convent fled the maid,
 The hated match to shun.
 'Ho ! shifts she thus ?' King Henry
 cried,
 'Sir Marmion, she shall be thy bride,
 If she were sworn a nun.'
 One way remained—the king's command
 Sent Marmion to the Scottish land ;
 I lingered here, and rescue planned
 For Clara and for me :
 This caitiff monk for gold did swear
 He would to Whitby's shrine repair,
 And by his drugs my rival fair
 A saint in heaven should be ;
 But ill the dastard kept his oath,
 Whose cowardice hath undone us both.

"And now my tongue the secret tells,
 Not that remorse my bosom swells,
 But to assure my soul that none
 Shall ever wed with Marmion.
 Had fortune my last hope betrayed,
 This packet, to the king conveyed,
 Had given him to the headsman's stroke,
 Although my heart that instant broke.—
 Now, men of death, work forth your
 will,
 For I can suffer, and be still ;
 And come he slow, or come he fast,
 It is but Death who comes at last.

"Yet dread me from my living tomb,
 Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome !
 If Marmion's late remorse should wake,
 Full soon such vengeance will he take
 That you shall wish the fiery Dane
 Had rather been your guest again.
 Behind, a darker hour ascends !
 The altars quake, the crosier bends,
 The ire of a despotic king
 Rides forth upon destruction's wing ;
 Then shall these vaults, so strong and
 deep,
 Burst open to the sea-wind's sweep ;

Some traveller then shall find my bones
Whitening amid disjointed stones,
And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,
Marvel such relics here should be."

Fixed was her look and stern her air;
Back from her shoulders streamed her
hair;

The locks that wont her brow to shade
Stared up erectly from her head;
Her figure seemed to rise more high;
Her voice despair's wild energy
Had given a tone of prophecy.

Appalled the astonished conclave sate;
With stupid eyes, the men of fate
Gazed on the light inspired form,
And listened for the avenging storm;
The judges felt the victim's dread;
No hand was moved, no word was said,

Till thus the abbot's doom was given,
Raising his sightless balls to heaven:
"Sister, let thy sorrows cease;
Sinful brother, part in peace!"

From that dire dungeon, place of doom,
Of execution too, and tomb,

Paced forth the judges three;
Sorrow it were and shame to tell
The butcher-work that there befell,
When they had glided from the cell
Of sin and misery.

An hundred winding steps convey
That conclave to the upper day;
But ere they breathed the fresher air
They heard the shriekings of despair,
And many a stifled groan.
With speed their upward way they
take,—

Such speed as age and fear can make,—
And crossed themselves for terror's sake,
As hurrying, tottering on.

Even in the vesper's heavenly tone
They seemed to hear a dying groan,
And bade the passing knell to toll
For welfare of a parting soul.
Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,
Northumbrian rocks in answer rung;
To Warkworth cell the echoes rolled,
His beads the wakeful hermit told;
The Bamborough peasant raised his
head,

But slept ere half a prayer he said;
So far was heard the mighty knell,
The stag sprung up on Cheviot Fell,
Spread his broad nostrils to the wind,
Listed before, aside, behind,
Then coached him down beside the hind,
And quaked among the mountain fern,
To hear that sound so dull and stern.

CANTO THIRD

THE HOSTEL, OR INN

THE livelong day Lord Marmion rode;
The mountain path the Palmer showed
By glen and streamlet winded still,
Where stunted birches hid the rill.
They might not choose the lowland road,
For the Merse forayers were abroad,
Who, fired with hate and thirst of prey,
Had scarcely failed to bar their way;
Oft on the trampling band from crown
Of some tall cliff the deer looked down;
On wing of jet from his repose
In the deep heath the blackcock rose;
Sprung from the gorse the timid roe,
Nor waited for the bending bow;
And when the stony path began
By which the naked peak they wan,
Up flew the snowy ptarmigan.
The noon had long been passed before
They gained the height of Lammer-
moor;

Thence winding down the northern
way,
Before them at the close of day
Old Gifford's towers and hamlet lay.

No summons calls them to the tower,
To spend the hospitable hour.
To Scotland's camp the lord was gone;
His cautious dame, in bower alone,
Dreaded her castle to uncloze,
So late, to unknown friends or foes.
On through the hamlet as they paced,
Before a porch whose front was graced,
With bush and flagon trimly placed,
Lord Marmion drew his rein:
The village inn seemed large, though
rude;

Its cheerful fire and hearty food
Might well relieve his train.
Down from their seats the horsemen
sprung,
With jingling spurs the court-yard rung;
They bind their horses to the stall,
For forage, food, and firing call,
And various clamor fills the hall:
Weighing the labor with the cost,
Toils everywhere the bustling host.

Soon, by the chimney's merry blaze,
Through the rude hostel might you gaze,
Might see where in dark nook aloof
The rafters of the sooty roof
Bore wealth of winter cheer;
Of sea-fowl dried, and solands store,
And gammons of the tusky boar,
And savory haunch of deer.

The chimney arch projected wide ;
Above, around it, and beside,

Were tools for housewives' hand ;
Nor wanted, in that martial day,
The implements of Scottish fray,
The buckler, lance, and brand.
Beneath its shade, the place of state.
On oaken settle Marmion sate,
And viewed around the blazing hearth
His followers mix in noisy mirth ;
Whom with brown ale, in jolly tide,
From ancient vessels ranged aside
Full actively their host supplied.

Theirs was the glee of martial breast,
And laughter theirs at little jest ;
And oft Lord Marmion deigned to aid,
And mingle in the mirth they made ;
For though, with men of high degree,
The proudest of the proud was he,
Yet, trained in camps, he knew the
art

To win the soldier's hardy heart.
They love a captain to obey,
Boisterous as March, yet fresh as May ;
With open hand and brow as free,
Lover of wine and minstrelsy ;
Ever the first to scale a tower,
As venturous in a lady's bower :—
Such buxom chief shall lead his host
From India's fires to Zembla's frost.

Resting upon his pilgrim staff,
Right opposite the Palmer stood,
His thin dark visage seen but half,
Half hidden by his hood.
Still fixed on Marmion was his look,
Which he, who ill such gaze could
brook,

Strove by a frown to quell ;
But not for that, though more than once
Full met their stern encountering glance,
The Palmer's visage fell.

By fits less frequent from the crowd
Was heard the burst of laughter loud ;
For still, as squire and archer stared
On that dark face and matted beard,
Their glee and game declined.
All gazed at length in silence drear,
Unbroke save when in comrade's ear
Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,
Thus whispered forth his mind :
"Saint Mary! saw'st thou e'er such
sight?

How pale his cheek, his eye how bright
Whene'er the firebrand's fickle light,
Glances beneath his cowl!
Full on our lord he sets his eye ;

For his best palfrey would not I
Endure that sullen scowl."

But Marmion, as to chase the awe
Which thus had quelled their hearts
who saw

The ever-varying firelight show
That figure stern and face of woe,
Now called upon a squire ;
"Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some
lay,
To speed the lingering night away ?
We slumber by the fire."

"So please you," thus the youth rejoined,
"Our choicest minstrel's left behind.
Ill may we hope to please your ear,
Accustomed Constant's strains to hear.
The harp full deftly can he strike,
And wake the lover's lute alike ;
To dear Saint Valentine no thrush
Sings livelier from a springtide bush,
No nightingale her lovelorn tune
More sweetly warbles to the moon.
Woe to the cause, whate'er it be,
Detains from us his melody,
Lavished on rocks and billows stern,
Or duller monks of Lindisfarne.
Now must I venture as I may,
To sing his favorite roundelay."

A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,
The air he chose was wild and sad ;
Such have I heard in Scottish land
Rise from the busy, harvest band,
When falls before the mountaineer
On Lowland plains the ripened ear.
Now one shrill voice the notes prolong,
Now a wild chorus swells the song ;
Oft have I listened and stood still
As it came softened up the hill,
And deemed it the lament of men
Who languished for their native glen,
And thought how sad would be such
sound

On Susquehanna's swampy ground,
Kentucky's wood-encumbered brake,
Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,
Where heart-sick exiles in the strain
Recalled fair Scotland's hills again !

SONG

Where shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast,
Parted forever?
Where, through groves deep and high
Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die,
Under the willow.

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Soft shall be his pillow.

There, through the summer day,
Cool streams are laving;
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving;
There thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted forever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never!

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Never, O never!

Where shall the traitor rest,
He the deceiver,
Who could win maiden's breast,
Ruin and leave her?
In the lost battle,
Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying.

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. There shall he be lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the false-hearted;
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
Ere life be parted.
Shame and dishonor sit
By his grave ever;
Blessing shall hallow it,—
Never, O never!

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Never, O never!

It ceased, the melancholy sound,
And silence sunk on all around.
The air was sad; but sadder still
It fell on Marmion's ear,
And plained as if disgrace and ill,
And shameful death, were near.
He drew his mantle past his face,
Between it and the band,
And rested with his head a space
Reclining on his hand,
His thoughts I scan not; but I ween
That, could their import have been
seen,
The meanest groom in all the hall,
That e'er tied courser to a stall,
Would scarce have wished to be their
prey,
For Lutterward and Fontenaye.

High minds, of native pride and force,
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse!
Fear, for their scourge, mean villains
have,
Thou art the torturer of the brave!
Yet fatal strength they boast to steel
Their minds to bear the wounds they
feel,
Even while they writhe beneath the
smart

Of civil conflict in the heart.
For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,
And smiling to Fitz-Eustace said:
"Is it not strange that, as ye sung,
Seemed in mine ear a death-peal rung,
Such as in nunneries they toll
For some departing sister's soul?
Say, what may this portend?"
Then first the Palmer silence broke,—
The livelong day he had not spoke,—
"The death of a dear friend."

Marmion, whose steady heart and eye
Ne'er changed in worst extremity;
Marmion, whose soul could scantily
brook
Even from his king a haughty look;
Whose accent of command controlled
In camps the boldest of the bold—
Thought, look, and utterance failed him
now,
Fallen was his glance and flushed his
brow:

For either in the tone,
Or something in the Palmer's look,
So full upon his conscience strook,
That answer he found none.
Thus oft it haps that when within
They shrink at sense of secret sin,
A feather daunts the brave;
A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,
And proudest princes veil their eyes
Before their meanest slave.

Well might he falter!—By his aid
Was Constance Beverley betrayed.
Not that he augured of the doom
Which on the living closed the tomb:
But, tired to hear the desperate maid
Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid,
And wroth because in wild despair
She practised on the life of Clare,
Its fugitive the Church he gave,
Though not a victim, but a slave,
And deemed restraint in convent
strange
Would hide her wrongs and her revenge.
Himself, proud Henry's favorite peer,
Held komish thunders idle fear;

Secure his pardon he might hold
For some slight mulct of penance-gold.
Thus judging, he gave secret way
When the stern priests surprised their
prey.

His train but deemed the favorite page
Was left behind to spare his age;
Or other if they deemed, none dared
To mutter what he thought and heard:
Woe to the vassal who durst pry
Into Lord Marmion's privacy!

His conscience slept—he deemed her
well,

And safe secured in distant cell;
But wakened by her favorite lay,
And that strange Palmer's boding say,
That fell so ominous and drear
Full on the object of his fear,
To aid remorse's venom'd throes,
Dark tales of convent-vengeance rose;
And Constance, late betrayed and
scorned,

All lovely on his soul returned;
Lovely as when at treacherous call
She left her convent's peaceful wall,
Crimsoned with shame, with terror
mute,

Dreading alike escape, pursuit,
Till love, victorious o'er alarms,
Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

"Alas!" he thought, "how changed that
mien!

How changed these timid looks have
been,

Since years of guilt and of disguise
Have steeled her brow and armed her
eyes!

No more of virgin terror speaks
The blood that mantles in her cheeks;
Fierce and unfeminine are there,
Frenzy for joy, for grief despair;
And I the cause—for whom were given
Her peace on earth, her hopes in
heaven!—

Would," thought he, as the picture
grows,

"I on its stalk had left the rose!
Oh, why should man's success remove
The very charms that wake his love?—
Her convent's peaceful solitude
Is now a prison harsh and rude;
And, pent within the narrow cell,
How will her spirit chafe and swell!
How brook the stern monastic laws!
The penance how—and I the cause!—
Vigil and scourge—perchance even
worse!

And twice he rose to cry, "To horse!"
And twice his sovereign's mandate came,
Like damp upon a kindling flame;
And twice he thought, "Gave I not
charge?

She should be safe, though not at
large?

They durst not, for their island, shred
One golden ringlet from her head."

While thus in Marmion's bosom strove
Repentance and reviving love,
Like whirlwinds whose contending sway
I've seen Loch Vennachar obey,
Their host the Palmer's speech had
heard,

And talkative took up the word:

"Ay, reverend pilgrim, you who stray
From Scotland's simple land away,

To visit realms afar,
You'll often learn the art to know
Of future weal or future woe,

By word, or sign, or star;
Yet might a knight his fortune hear,

If, Knight-like, he despises fear,
Not far from hence;—if fathers old
Aright our hamlet legend told."

These broken words the menials move,—
For marvels still the vulgar love,—

And, Marmion giving license cold,
His tale the host thus gladly told:—

THE HOST'S TALE

"A clerk could tell what years have
flown

Since Alexander filled our throne,—
Third monarch of that warlike name,—

And eke the time when here he came
To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord:

A braver never drew a sword;

A wiser never, at the hour
Of midnight, spoke the word of power;

The same whom ancient records call
The founder of the Goblin-Hall.

I would, Sir Knight, your longer stay
Gave you that cavern to survey.

Of lofty roof and ample size,
Beneath the castle deep it lies:

To hew the living rock profound,
The floor to pave, the arch to round,

There never toiled a mortal arm.

It all was wrought by word and charm;
And I have heard my grandsire say

That the wild clamor and affray
Of those dread artisans of hell,

Who labored under Hugo's spell,
Sounded as loud as ocean's war

Among the caverns of Dunbar.

"The king Lord Gifford's castle sought,
 Deep laboring with uncertain thought.
 Even then he mustered all his host,
 To meet upon the western coast;
 For Norse and Danish galleys plied
 Their oars within the Firth of Clyde.
 There floated Haco's banner trim
 Above Norweyan warriors grim,
 Savage of heart and large of limb,
 Threatening both continent and isle,
 Bute, Arran, Cunninghame, and Kyle.
 Lord Gifford, deep beneath the ground,
 Heard Alexander's bugle sound,
 And tarried not his garb to change,
 But, in his wizard habit strange,
 Came forth,—a quaint and fearful sight:
 His mantle lined with fox-skins white;
 His high and wrinkled forehead bore
 A pointed cap, such as of yore
 Clerks say that Pharaoh's Magi wore;
 His shoes were marked with cross and
 spell.

Upon his breast a pentacle;
 His zone of virgin parchment thin,
 Or, as some tell, of dead man's skin,
 Bore many a planetary sign,
 Combust, and retrograde, and trine;
 And in his hand he held prepared
 A naked sword without a guard.

"Dire dealings with the fiendish race
 Had marked strange lines upon his face;
 Vigil and fast had worn him grim,
 His eyesight dazzled seemed and dim,
 As one unused to upper day;
 Even his own menials with dismay
 Beheld, Sir Knight, the grisly sire
 In this unwonted wild attire;
 Unwonted, for traditions run
 He seldom thus beheld the sun.
 'I know,' he said,—his voice was hoarse
 And broken seemed its hollow force,—
 'I know the cause, although untold,
 Why the king seeks his vassal's hold:
 Vainly from me my liege would know
 His kingdom's future weal or woe;
 But yet, if strong his arm and heart,
 His courage may do more than art.

"Of middle air the demons proud,
 Who ride upon the racking cloud,
 Can read in fixed or wandering star
 The issue of events afar,
 But still their sullen aid withhold.
 Save when by mightier force controlled.
 Such late I summoned to my hall;
 And though so potent was the call
 That scarce the deepest nook of hell
 I deemed a refuge from the spell,

Yet, obstinate in silence still,
 The haughty demon mocks my skill.
 But thou,—who little know'st thy might
 As born upon that blessed night
 When yawning graves and dying groan
 Proclaimed hell's empire overthrown,—
 With untaught valor shalt compel
 Response denied to magic spell.
 'Gramercy,' quoth our monarch free,
 'Place him but front to front with me,
 And, by this good and honored brand,
 The gift of Cœur-de-Lion's hand,
 Soothly I swear that, tide what tide,
 The demon shall a buffet bide.'
 His bearing bold the wizard viewed,
 And thus, well pleased, his speech re-
 newed:

'There spoke the blood of Malcolm!—
 mark:
 Forth pacing hence at midnight dark,
 The rampart seek whose circling crown
 Crests the ascent of yonder down:
 A southern entrance shalt thou find:
 There halt, and there thy bugle wind,
 And trust thine elfin foe to see
 In guise of thy worst enemy.
 Couch then thy lance and spur thy
 steed—

Upon him! and Saint George to speed!
 If he go down, thou soon shalt know
 Whate'er these airy sprites can show;
 If thy heart fail thee in the strife,
 I am no warrant for thy life.'

"Soon as the midnight bell did ring,
 Alone and armed, forth rode the king
 To that old camp's deserted round.
 Sir Knight, you well might mark the
 mound
 Left hand the town,—the Pictish race
 The trench, long since, in blood did
 trace;

The moor around is brown and bare,
 The space within is green and fair.
 The spot our village children know,
 For there the earliest wild-flowers grow;
 But woe betide the wandering wight
 That trends its circle in the night!
 The breadth across a bowshot clear,
 Gives ample space for full career;
 Opposed to the four points of heaven,
 By four deep gaps are entrance given.
 The southernmost our monarch passed,
 Halted, and blew a gallant blast;
 And on the north, within the ring,
 Appeared the form of England's king,
 Who then, a thousand leagues afar,
 In Palestine waged holy war:
 Yet arms like England's did he wield;

Alike the leopards in the shield,
Alike his Syrian courser's frame,
The rider's length of limb the same.
Long afterwards did Scotland know
Fell Edward was her deadliest foe.

"The vision made our monarch start,
But soon he manned his noble heart,
And in the first career they ran,
The Elfin Knight fell, horse and man;
Yet did a splinter of his lance
Through Alexander's visor glance,
And razed the skin—a puny wound.
The king, light leaping to the ground,
With naked blade his phantom foe
Compelled the future war to show.

Of Largs he saw the glorious plain,
Where still gigantic bones remain,
Memorial of the Danish war;
Himself he saw, amid the field,
On high his brandished war-axe wield
And strike proud Haco from his car,
While all around the shadowy kings
Denmark's grim ravens cowered their
wings.

'T is said that in that awful night
Remoter visions met his sight,
Foreshowing future conquest far,
When our sons' sons wage Northern
war;

A royal city, tower and spire,
Reddened the midnight sky with fire,
And shouting crews her navy bore
Triumphant to the victor shore.
Such signs may learned clerks explain,
They pass the wit of simple swain.

"The joyful king turned home again,
Headed his host, and quelled the Dane;
But yearly, when returned the night
Of his strange combat with the sprite,
His wound must bleed and smart;

Lord Gifford then would gibing say,
'Bold as ye were, my liege, ye pay
The penance of your start.'

Long since, beneath Dunfermline's nave,
King Alexander fills his grave,

Our Lady give him rest!
Yet still the knightly spear and shield
The Elfin Warrior doth wield

Upon the brown hill's breast,
And many a knight hath proved his
chance

In the charmed ring to break a lance,
But all have foully sped;

Save two, as legends tell, and they
Were Wallace wight and Gilbert
Hay.—

. Gentles, my tale is said."

The quaighs were deep, the liquor
strong,

And on the tale the yeoman-throng
Had made a comment sage and long,

But Marmion gave a sign,
And with their lord the squires retire,
The rest around the hostel fire

Their drowsy limbs recline;
For pillow, underneath each head
The quiver and the targe were laid.
Deep slumbering on the hostel floor,
Oppressed with toil and ale, they snore;
The dying flame, in fitful change,
Threw on the group its shadows strange.

Apart, and nestling in the hay
Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay;
Scarce by the pale moonlight were seen
The foldings of his mantle green:
Lightly he dreamt, as youth will dream,
Of sport by thicket, or by stream,
Of hawk or hound, or ring or glove,
Or, lighter yet, of lady's love.
A cautious tread his slumber broke,
And, close beside him when he woke,
In moonbeam half, and half in gloom,
Stood a tall form with nodding plume;
But, ere his dagger Eustace drew,
His master Marmion's voice he knew:

"Fitz-Eustace! rise,—I cannot rest;
Yon churl's wild legend haunts my
breast,
And graver thoughts have chafed my
mood;

The air must cool my feverish blood,
And fain would I ride forth to see
The scene of elfin chivalry.
Arise, and saddle me my steed;
And, gentle Eustace, take good heed
Thou dost not rouse these drowsy
slaves;

I would not that the prating knaves
Had cause for saying, o'er their ale,
That I could credit such a tale."
Then softly down the steps they slid,
Eustace the stable door undid,
And, darkling, Marmion's steed arrayed,
While, whispering, thus the baron
said:—

"Didst never, good my youth, hear tell
That on the hour when I was born
Saint George, who graced my sire's cha-
pelle,

Down from his steed of marble fell,
A weary wight forlorn?

The flattering chaplains all agree
The champion left his steed to me.

I would, the omen's truth to show,
That I could meet this elfin foe!
Blithe would I battle for the right
To ask one question at the sprite.—
Vain thought! for elves, if elves there
be,

An empty race, by fount or sea
To dashing waters dance and sing,
Or round the green oak wheel their
ring."

Thus speaking, he his steed bestrode,
And from the hostel slowly rode.

Fitz-Eustace followed him abroad,
And marked him pace the village road,
And listened to his horse's tramp,
Till, by the lessening sound,
He judged that of the Pictish camp
Lord Marmion sought the round.

Wonder it seemed, in the squire's eyes,
That one, so wary held and wise,—
Of whom 'twas said, he scarce received
For gospel what the Church believed,—
Should, stirred by idle tale,
Ride forth in silence of the night,
As hoping half to meet a sprite,
Arrayed in plate and mail.

For little did Fitz-Eustace know
That passions in contending flow
Unfix the strongest mind;
Wearied from doubt to doubt to flee,
We welcome fond credulity,
Guide confident, though blind.

Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,
But patient waited till he heard
At distance, pricked to utmost speed,
The foot-tramp of a flying steed

Come townward rushing on;
First, dead, as if on turf it trode,
Then, clattering on the village road,—
In other pace than forth he yode,

Returned Lord Marmion,
Down hastily he sprung from selle,
And in his haste wellnigh he fell;
To the squire's hand the rein he threw,
And spoke no word as he withdrew:
But yet the moonlight did betray
The falcon-crest was soiled with clay;
And plainly might Fitz Eustace see,
By stains upon the charger's knee
And his left side, that on the moor
He had not kept his footing sure.
Long musing on these wondrous signs,
At length to rest the squire reclines,
Broken and short; for still between
Would dreams of terror intervene:
Eustace did ne'er so blithely mark
The first notes of the morning lark.

CANTO FOURTH

THE CAMP

EUSTACE, I said, did blithely mark
The first notes of the merry lark.
The lark sang shrill, the cock he crew,
And loudly Marmion's bugles blew,
And with their light and lively call
Brought groom and yeoman to the stall.

Whistling they came and free of heart,
But soon their mood was changed;
Complaint was heard on every part
Of some thing disarranged.

Some clamored loud for armor lost;
Some brawled and wrangled with the
host;

'By Becket's bones,' cried one, 'I fear
That some false Scot has stolen my
spear!'

Young Blount, Lord Marmion's second
squire,

Found his steed wet with sweat and mire,
Although the rated horse-boy sware
Last night he dressed him sleek and fair,
While chafed the impatient squire like
thunder,

Old Hubert shouts in fear and wonder,—
Help, gentle Blount! help, comrades all!
Bevis lies dying in his stall;
To Marmion who the plight dare tell
Of the good steed he loves so well?
Gaping for fear and ruth, they saw
The charger panting on his straw;
Till one, who would seem wisest, cried,
"What else but evil could betide,
With that cursed Palmer for our guide?
Better we had through mire and bush
Been lantern-led by Friar Rush."

Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but
guessed,

Nor wholly understood,
His comrades' clamorous complaints sup-
pressed;

He knew Lord Marmion's mood.
Him, ere he issued forth, he sought,
And found deep plunged in gloomy
thought,

And did his tale display
Simply, as if he knew of nought
To cause such disarray.

Lord Marmion gave attention cold,
Nor marvelled at the wonders told,—
Passed them as accidents of course,
And bade his clarions sound to horse.

Young Henry Blount, meanwhile, the
cost
Had reckoned with their Scottish host;

And, as the charge he cast and paid,
 "Ill thou deserv'st thy hire," he said;
 "Dost see, thou knave, my horse's plight?
 Fairies have ridden him all the night,
 And left him in a foam!

I trust that soon a conjuring band,
 With English cross and blazing brand,
 Shall drive the devils from this land
 To their infernal home;

For in this haunted den, I trow,
 All night they trampled to and fro."
 The laughing host looked on the hire:

"Gramercy, gentle southern squire,
 And if thou com'st among the rest,
 With Scottish broadsword to be blest,
 Sharp be the brand, and sure the blow,
 And short the pang to undergo."
 Here stayed their talk, for Marmion
 Gave now the signal to set on.
 The Palmer showing forth the way,
 They journeyed all the morning-day.

The greensward way was smooth and
 good,
 Through Humble's and through Saltoun's
 wood;

A forest glade, which, varying still,
 Here gave a view of dale and hill
 There narrower closed till overhead
 A vaulted screen the branches made.
 "A pleasant path," Fitz-Eustace said;
 "Such as where errant knights might
 see

Adventures of high chivalry,
 Might meet some damsel flying fast,
 With hair unbound and looks aghast;
 And smooth and level course were here,
 In her defence to break a spear.
 Here, too, are twilight nooks and dells;
 And oft in such, the story tells,
 The damsel kind, from danger freed,
 Did grateful pay her champion's meed."
 He spoke to cheer Lord Marmion's mind,
 Perchance to show his lore designed;

For Eustace much had pored
 Upon a huge romantic tome,
 In the hall-window of his home,
 Imprinted at the antique dome
 Of Caxton or de Worde,
 Therefore he spoke,—but spoke in vain,
 For Marmion answered nought again.

Now sudden, distant trumpets, shrill,
 In notes prolonged by wood and hill,
 Were heard to echo far;

Each ready archer grasped his bow,
 But by the flourish soon they know

They breathed no point of war.
 Yet cautious, as in foeman's land,

Lord Marmion's order speeds the band
 Some opener ground to gain;
 And scarce a furlong had they rode,
 When thinner trees receding showed
 A little woodland plain.

Just in that advantageous glade
 The halting troop a line had made,
 As forth from the opposing shade
 Issued a gallant train.

First came the trumpets, at whose clang
 So late the forest echoes rang;
 On prancing steeds they forward pressed,
 With scarlet mantle, azure vest;
 Each at his trump a banner wore,
 Which Scotland's royal scutcheon bore:
 Heralds and pursuivants, by name
 Bute, Islay, Marchmont, Rothsay,
 came,

In painted tabards, proudly showing
 Gules, argent, or, and azure glowing.

Attendant on a king-at-arms,
 Whose hand the armorial truncheon
 held

That feudal strife had often quelled
 When wildest its alarms.

He was a man of middle age,
 In aspect manly, grave, and sage,
 As on king's errand come;

But in the glances of his eye
 A penetrating, keen, and sly
 Expression found its home;

The flash of that satiric rage
 Which, bursting on the early stage,
 Branded the vices of the age,

And broke the keys of Rome.
 On milk-white palfrey forth he paced,
 His cap of maintenance was graced
 With the proud heron-plume.

From his steed's shoulder, loin, and
 breast,

Silk housings swept the ground,
 With Scotland's arms, device, and crest,
 Embroidered round and round.

The double tressure might you see,
 First by Achaius borne,

The thistle and the fleur-de-lis,
 And gallant unicorn.

So bright the king's armorial coat
 That scarce the dazzled eye could note,
 In living colors blazoned brave,
 The Lion, which his title gave;
 A train, which well besemed his state
 But all unarmed, around him wait.

Still is thy name in high account,
 And still thy verse has charms,

Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,
 Lord Lion King-at-arms!

Down from his horse did Marmion spring
 Soon as he saw the Lion-King ;
 For well the stately baron knew
 To him such courtesy was due
 Whom royal James himself had crowned,
 And on his temples placed the round
 Of Scotland's ancient diadem,
 And wet his brow with hallowed wine,
 And on his finger given to shine
 The emblematic gem.

Their mutual greetings duly made,
 The Lion thus his message said :—
 ' Though Scotland's King hath deeply
 sworn

Ne'er to knit faith with Henry more,
 And strictly hath forbid resort
 From England to his royal court,
 Yet, for he knows Lord Marmion's name
 And honors much his warlike fame,
 My liege hath deemed it shame and
 lack

Of courtesy to turn him back ;
 And by his order I, your guide,
 Must lodging fit and fair provide
 Till finds King James meet time to see
 The flower of English chivalry."

Though inly chafed at this delay,
 Lord Marmion bears it as he may.
 The Palmer, his mysterious guide,
 Beholding thus his place supplied,
 Sought to take leave in vain ;
 Strict was the Lion-King's command
 That none who rode in Marmion's band
 Should sever from the train.
 " England has here enow of spies
 In Lady Heron's witching eyes :"
 To Marchmount thus apart he said,
 But fair pretext to Marmion made.
 The right-hand path they now decline,
 And trace against the stream the Tyne.

At length up that wild dale they wind,
 Where Crichtoun Castle crowns the
 bank ;

For there the Lion's care assigned
 A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.
 That castle rises on the steep
 Of the green vale of Tyne ;
 And far beneath, where slow they creep
 From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
 Where alders moist and willows weep,

You hear her streams repine.
 The towers in different ages rose,
 Their various architecture shows
 The builders' various hands ;
 A mighty mass, that could oppose,
 When deadliest hatred fired its foes,
 The vengeful Douglas bands.

Crichtoun ! though now thy miry court
 But pens the lazy steer and sheep,
 Thy turrets rude and tottered keep
 Have been the minstrel's loved resort.
 Oft have I traced, within thy fort,
 Of mouldering shields the mystic
 sense.

Scutcheons of honor or pretence,
 Quartered in old armorial sort,
 Remains of rude magnificence,
 Nor wholly yet hath time defaced
 Thy lordly gallery fair,
 Nor yet the stony cord unbraced
 Whose twisted knots, with roses laced,
 Adorn thy ruined stair.

Still rises unimpaired below
 The court-yard's graceful portico ;
 Above its cornice, row and row
 Of fair-hewn facets richly show
 Their pointed diamond form,
 Though there but houseless cattle go,
 To shield them from the storm.
 And, shuddering, still may we explore,
 Where oft whilom were captives pent,
 The darkness of thy Massy More,
 Or, from thy grass-grown battlement,
 May trace in undulating line
 The sluggish mazes of the Tyne.

Another aspect Crichtoun showed
 As through its portal Marmion rode ;
 But yet 't was melancholy state
 Received him at the outer gate,
 For none were in the castle then
 But women, boys, or aged men.
 With eyes scarce dried, the sorrowing
 dame

To welcome noble Marmion came ;
 Her son, a stripling twelve years old,
 Proffered the baron's rein to hold ;
 For each man that could draw a sword
 Had marched that morning with their
 lord,

Earl Adam Hepburn,—he who died
 On Flodden by his sovereign's side.
 Long may his lady look in vain !
 She ne'er shall see his gallant train
 Come sweeping back through Crichtoun
 Dean.

'T was a brave race before the name
 Of hated Bothwell stained their fame.

And here two days did Marmion rest,
 With every right that honor claims,
 Attended as the king's own guest ;—

Such the command of Royal James,
 Who marshalled then his land's array,
 Upon the Borough-moor that lay.
 Perchance he would not foeman's eye

Upon his gathering host should pry,
Till full prepared was every band
To march against the English land.
Here while they dwelt, did Lindesay's
wit

Oft cheer the baron's moodier fit;
And, in his turn, he knew to prize
Lord Marmion's powerful mind and
wise,—

Trained in the lore of Rome and Greece,
And policies of war and peace.

It chanced, as fell the second night,
That on the battlements they walked,
And by the slowly fading light

Of varying topics talked:
And, unaware, the herald-bard
Said Marmion might his toil have spared
In travelling so far,

For that a messenger from heaven
In vain to James had counsel given

Against the English war;
And, closer questioned, thus he told
A tale which chronicles of old
In Scottish story have enrolled:—

SIR DAVID LINDESAY'S TALE

"Of all the palaces so fair,
Built for the royal dwelling
In Scotland, far beyond compare
Linthgow is excelling;
And in its park, in jovial June,
How sweet the merry linnet's tune,
How blithe the blackbird's lay!
The wild buck bells from ferny brake,
The coot dives merry on the lake,
The saddest heart might pleasure take
To see all nature gay.

But June is to our sovereign dear
The heaviest month in all the year;
Too well his cause of grief you know,
June saw his father's overthrow.
Woe to the traitors who could bring
The princely boy against his king!
Still in his conscience burns the sting.
In offices as strict as Lent
King James's June is ever spent.

"When last this ruthful month was
come,

And in Linthgow's holy dome
The king, as wont, was praying;
While for his royal father's soul
The chanters sung, the bells did toll,
The bishop mass was saying—

For now the year brought round again
The day the luckless king was slain—
In Catherine's aisle the monarch knelt,
With sackcloth shirt and iron belt,

And eyes with sorrow streaming;
Around him in their stalls of state
The Thistle's Knight-Companions sate,
Their banners o'er them beaming.
I too was there, and, sooth to tell,
Bedeafened with the jangling knell,
Was watching where the sunbeams fell,
Through the stained casement gleam-
ing;

But while I marked what next befell
It seemed as I were dreaming,
Stepped from the crowd a ghostly wight,
In azure gown, with cincture white;
His forehead bald, his head was bare,
Down hung at length his yellow hair.—
Now, mock me not when, good my lord,
I pledge to you my knightly word
That when I saw his placid grace,
His simple majesty of face,
His solemn bearing, and his pace

So stately gliding on,—
Seemed to me ne'er did limner paint
So just an image of the saint
Who propped the Virgin in her faint,
The loved Apostle John!

"He stepped before the monarch's chair,
And stood with rustic plainness there,
And little reverence made;
Nor head, nor body, bowed, nor bent,
But on the desk his arm he leant,
And words like these he said,
In a low voice,—but never tone
So thrilled through vein, and nerve, and
bone:—

'My mother sent me from afar,
Sir King, to warn thee not to war,—
Woe waits on thine array;
If war thou wilt, of woman fair,
Her witching wiles and wanton snare,
James Stuart, doubly warned, beware:
God keep thee as He may!'—
The wondering monarch seemed to seek
For answer, and found none;
And when he raised his head to speak,
The monitor was gone.
The marshal and myself had cast
To stop him as he outward passed;
But, lighter than the whirlwind's blast,
He vanished from our eyes,
Like sunbeam on the billow cast,
That glances but, and dies."

While Lindesay told his marvel strange
The twilight was so pale,
He marked not Marmion's color change
While listening to the tale;
But, after a suspended pause,
The baron spoke: "Of Nature's laws

So strong I held the force,
That never superhuman cause .

Could e'er control their course,
And, three days since, had judged your
aim

Was but to make your guest your
game ;

But I have seen, since past the Tweed,
What much has changed my sceptic
creed,

And made me credit aught."—He stayed,
And seemed to wish his words unsaid,
But, by that strong emotion pressed
Which prompts us to unload our breast

Even when discovery's pain,
To Lindesay did at length unfold
The tale his village host had told,

At Gifford, to his train.
Nought of the Palmer says he there.
And nought of Constance or of Clare;
The thoughts which broke his sleep he
seems

To mention but as feverish dreams.

"In vain," said he, "to rest I spread
My burning limbs and couched my head ;

Fantastic thoughts returned,
And, by their wild dominion led,
My heart within me burned.

So sore was the delirious goad,
I took my steed and forth I rode,
And, as the moon shone bright and
cold,

Soon reached the camp upon the wold.
The southern entrance I passed through,
And halted, and my bugle blew.
Methought an answer met my ear,—
Yet was the blast so low and drear,
So hollow, and so faintly blown,
It might be echo of my own.

"Thus judging, for a little space
I listened ere I left the place,

But scarce could trust my eyes,
Nor yet can think they serve me true,
When sudden in the ring I view,
In form distinct of shape and hue,

A mounted champion rise.—
I've fought, Lord-Lion, many a day,
In single fight and mixed affray,
And ever, I myself may say,

Have borne me as a knight ;
But when this unexpected foe
Seemed starting from the gulf below,—
I care not though the truth I show,—

I trembled with affright ;
And as I placed in rest my spear,
My hand so shook for very fear,
I scarce could couch it right.

"Why need my tongue the issue tell?
We ran our course,—my charger fell ;—
What could he 'gainst the shock of
hell?

I rolled upon the plain.
High o'er my head with threatening
hand

The spectre shook his naked brand,—

Yet did the worst remain :
My dazzled eyes I upward cast,—
Not opening hell itself could blast

Their sight like what I saw !
Full on his face the moonbeam strook !—
A face could never be mistook !

I knew the stern vindictive look,
And held my breath for awe.
I saw the face of one who, fled
To foreign climes, has long been dead,—
I well believe the last ;

For ne'er from visor raised did stare
A human warrior with a glare

So grimly and so ghast.
Thrice o'er my head he shook the blade ;
But when to good Saint George I prayed,
—The first time e'er I asked his aid,—

He plunged it in the sheath,
And, on his courser mounting light,
He seemed to vanish from my sight :
The moonbeam drooped, and deepest
night

Sunk down upon the heath.—
'T were long to tell what cause I have
To know his face that met me there,
Called by his hatred from the grave
To cumber upper air ;
Dead or alive, good cause had he
To be my mortal enemy."

Marvelled Sir David of the Mount ;
Then, learned in story, gan recount
Such chance had happened of old,
When once, near Norham, there did
fight

A spectre fell of fiendish might,
In likeness of a Scottish knight
With Brian Bulmer bold,
And trained him nigh to disallow
The aid of his baptismal vow,
"And such a phantom, too, 't is said,
With Highland broadsword, targe, and
plaid,

And fingers red with gore,
Is seen in Rothiemurcus glade,
Or where the sable pine-trees shade
Dark Tomantoul, and Auchnaslaid,
Dromouchty, or Glenmore.

And yet, what'er such legends say
Of warlike demon, ghost, or fay,
On mountain, moor, or plain,

Spotless in faith, in bosom bold,
True son of chivalry should hold

These midnight terrors vain ;
For seldom have such spirits power
To harm, save in the evil hour
When guilt we meditate within
Or harbor unrepented sin."—

Lord Marmion turned him half aside,
And twice to clear his voice he tried,

Then pressed Sir David's hand,—
But nought, at length, in answer said ;
And here their further converse stayed,

Each ordering that his band
Should bowne them with the rising day,
To Scotland's camp to take their way,—
Such was the king's command.

Early they took Dun-Edin's road,
And I could trace each step they trode ;
Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rock, nor stone,
Lies on the path to me unknown.
Much might it boast of storied lore ;
But, passing such digression o'er,
Suffice it that their route was laid
Across the furzy hills of Braid.
They passed the glen and scanty rill,
And climbed the opposing bank, until
They gained the top of Blackford Hill.

Blackford ! on whose uncultured breast,
Among the broom and thorn and whin,
A truant-boy, I sought the nest,
Or listed, as I lay at rest,

While rose on breezes thin
The murmur of the city crowd,
And, from his steeple jangling loud,
Saint Giles's mingling din.

Now, from the summit to the plain,
Waves all the hill with yellow grain ;
And o'er the landscape as I look,
Nought do I see unchanged remain,
Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook.
To me they make a heavy moan
Of early friendships past and gone.

But different far the change has been,
Since Marmion from the crown
Of Blackford saw that martial scene
Upon the bent so brown :
Thousand pavilions, white as snow,
Spread all the Borough-moor below,
Upland, and dale, and down.
A thousand did I say ? I ween,
Thousands on thousands there were seen.
That checkered all the heath between
The streamlet and the town,
In crossing ranks extending far,
Forming a camp irregular ;
Off giving way where still there stood

Some relics of the old oak wood,
That darkly huge did intervene
And tamed the glaring white with green :
In these extended lines there lay
A martial kingdom's vast array.

For from Hebudes, dark with rain,
To eastern Lodou's fertile plain,
And from the southern Redswire edge
To furthest Rosse's rocky ledge,
From west to east, from south to north,
Scotland sent all her warriors forth.
Marmion might hear the mingled hum
Of myriads up the mountain come,—
The horses' tramp and tinkling clank,
Where chiefs reviewed their vassal rank,
And charger's shrilling neigh,—

And see the shifting lines advance,
While frequent flashed from shield and
lance

The sun's reflected ray.

Thin curling in the morning air,
The wreaths of failing smoke declare
To embers now the brands decayed,
Where the night-watch their fires had
made.

They saw, slow rolling on the plain,
Full many a baggage-cart and wain,
And dire artillery's clumsy car,
By sluggish oxen tugged to war ;
And there were Borthwick's Sisters
Seven,

And culverins which France had given.
Ill-omened gift ! the guns remain
The conqueror's spoil on Flodden plain.

Nor marked they less where in the air
A thousand streamers flaunted fair ;
Various in shape, device, and hue,
Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,
Broad, narrow, swallow-tailed, and
square,

Scroll, pennon, pencil, bandrol, there
O'er the pavilions flew.

Highest and midmost, was descried
The royal banner floating wide ;

The staff, a pine-tree, strong and
straight,

Pitched deeply in a massive stone,
Which still in memory is shown,

Yet bent beneath the standard's
weight,

When'er the western wind unrolled
With toil the huge and cumbrous
fold,

And gave to view the dazzling field,
Where in proud Scotland's royal shield
The ruddy lion ramped in gold.

Lord Marmion viewed the landscape
 bright,
 He viewed it with a chief's delight,
 Until within him burned his heart,
 And lightning from his eye did part,
 As on the battle-day ;
 Such glance did falcon never dart
 When stooping on his prey.
 "Oh! well, Lord-Lion, hast thou said,
 Thy king from warfare to dissuade
 Were but a vain essay ;
 For, by Saint George, were that host
 mine,
 Not power infernal nor divine
 Should once to peace my soul incline,
 Till I had dimmed their armor's shine
 In glorious battle-fray !"
 Answered the bard, of milder mood :
 'Fair is the sight,—and yet 'twere
 good
 That kings would think withal,
 When peace and wealth their land has
 blessed,
 "T is better to sit still at rest
 Than rise, perchance to fall."

Still on the spot Lord Marmion stayed,
 For fairer scene he ne'er surveyed.
 When sated with the martial show
 That peopled all the plain below;
 The wandering eye could o'er it go,
 And mark the distant city glow
 With gloomy splendor red ;
 For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and
 slow,
 That round her sable turrets flow,
 The morning beams were shed,
 And tinged them with a lustre proud,
 Like that which streaks a thunder-
 cloud.
 Such dusky grandeur clothed the height
 Where the huge castle holds its state,
 And all the steep-slope down,
 Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
 Piled deep and massy, close and high.
 Mine own romantic town !
 But northward far, with purer blaze,
 On Ochil mountains fell the rays,
 And as each heathy top they kissed,
 It gleamed a purple amethyst.
 Yonder the shores of Fife you saw,
 Here Preston-Bay and Berwick-law ;
 And, broad between them rolled,
 The gallant Firth the eye might note,
 Whose islands on its bosom float,
 Like emeralds chased in gold.
 Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely pent ;
 As if to give his rapture vent,
 The spur he to his charger lent,

And raised his bridle hand,
 And making demi-volt in air,
 Cried, " Where's the coward that would
 not dare

To fight for such a land !"
 The Lindesay smiled his joy to see,
 Nor Marmion's frown repressed his glee.

Thus while they looked, a flourish proud,
 Where mingled trump, and clarion loud,
 And fife, and kettle-drum,
 And sackbut deep, and psaltery,
 And war-pipe with discordant cry,
 And cymbal clattering to the sky,
 Making wild music bold and high,

Did up the mountain come ;
 The whilst the bells with distant chime
 Merrily tolled the hour of prime,
 And thus the Lindesay spoke :

" Thus clamor still the war-notes when
 The king to mass his way has ta'en,
 Or to Saint Catherine's of Sienne,
 Or Chapel of Saint Rocque.

To you they speak of martial fame,
 But me remind of peaceful game,
 When blither was their cheer,
 Thrilling in Falkland-woods the air,
 In signal none his steed should spare.
 But strive which foremost might
 repair

To the downfall of the deer.

" Nor less," he said, " when looking forth
 I view yon Empress of the North
 Sit on her hilly throne,
 Her palace's imperial bowers,
 Her castle, proof to hostile powers,
 Her stately halls and holy towers—

Nor less," he said, " I moan
 To think what woe mischance may
 bring,

And how these merry bells may ring
 The death-dirge of our gallant king,
 Or with their larum call
 The burghers forth to watch and ward,
 'Gainst Southern sack and fires to
 guard

Dun-Edin's leaguered wall.—
 But not for my presaging thought,
 Dream conquest sure or cheaply bought !

Lord Marmion, I say nay :
 God is the guider of the field,
 He breaks the champion's spear and
 shield ;

But thou thyself shalt say,
 When joins yon host in deadly stowre,
 That England's dames must weep in
 bower.

Her monks the death-mass sing ;

For never saw'st thou such a power
 Led on by such a king."
 And now, down winding to the plain,
 The barriers of the camp they gain,
 And there they made a stay,—
 There stays the Minstrel till he fling
 His hand o'er every Border string,
 And fit his harp the pomp to sing
 Of Scotland's ancient court and king,
 In the succeeding lay.

CANTO FIFTH

THE COURT

THE train has left the hills of Braid ;
 The barrier guard have open made—
 So Lindesay bade—the palisade
 That closed the tented ground ;
 Their men the warders backward drew,
 And carried pikes as they rode through
 Into its ample bound.
 Fast ran the Scottish warriors there,
 Upon the Southern band to stare,
 And envy with their wonder rose,
 To see such well-appointed foes ;
 Such length of shafts, such mighty
 bows,

So huge, that many simply thought
 But for a vaunt such weapons wrought,
 And little deemed their force to feel
 Through links of mail and plates of steel
 When, rattling upon Flodden vale,
 The cloth-yard arrows flew like hail.

Nor less did Marmion's skilful view
 Glance every line and squadron through,
 And much he marvelled one small land
 Could marshal forth such various band ;

For men-at-arms were here,
 Heavily sheathed in mail and plate,
 Like iron towers for strength and weight
 On Flemish steeds of bone and height,
 With battle-axe and spear.

Young knights and squires, a lighter
 train,

Practised their charges on the plain,
 By aid of leg, of hand, and rein,

Each warlike feat to show,
 To pass, to wheel, the croupe to gain,
 And high curvet, that not in vain

The sword-sway might descend amain
 On foeman's casque below

He saw the hardy burghers there
 March armed on foot with faces bare,

For visor they wore none,
 Nor waving plume, nor crest of knight ;
 But burnished were their corselets
 bright,

Their brigantines and gorgets light

Like very silver shone.
 Long pikes they had for standing fight,
 Two-handed swords they wore,
 And many wielded mace of weight,
 And bucklers bright they bore.

On foot the yeoman too, but dressed
 In his steel-jack, a swarthy vest,
 With iron quilted well ;
 Each at his back—a slender store—
 His forty days' provision bore,
 As feudal statutes tell.

His arms were halbert, axe, or spear,
 A crossbow there, a hagbut here,
 A dagger-knife, and brand.

Sober he seemed and sad of cheer,
 As loath to leave his cottage dear
 And march to foreign strand,
 Or musing who would guide his steer
 To till the fallow land.

Yet deem not in his thoughtful eye
 Did aught of dastard terror lie ;
 More dreadful far his ire
 Than theirs who, scorning danger's name
 In eager mood to battle came,
 Their valor like light straw on flame,
 A fierce but fading fire.

Not so the Borderer :—bred to war,
 He knew the battle's din afar,
 And joyed to hear it swell.
 His peaceful day was slothful ease ;
 Nor harp nor pipe his ear could please
 Like the loud slogan yell.

On active steed, with lance and blade,
 The light-armed prickler plied his trade,—
 Let nobles fight for fame ;
 Let vassals follow where they lead,
 Burghers, to guard their townships,
 bleed,

But war's the Borderers' game.
 Their gain, their glory, their delight,
 To sleep the day, maraud the night,
 O'er mountain, moss and moor ;
 Joyful to fight they took their way,
 Scarce caring who might win the day,
 Their booty was secure.

These, as Lord Marmion's train passed
 by,

Looked on at first with careless eye,
 Nor marvelled aught, well taught to
 know

The form and force of English bow.
 But when they saw the lord arrayed
 In splendid arms and rich brocade,
 Each Borderer to his kinsman said,—

"Hist, Ringan ! seest thou there !
 Canst guess which road they'll homeward
 ride ?

Oh ! could we but on Border side,
By Eusedale glen, or Liddell's tide,
Beset a prize so fair !
That fangless Lion, too, their guide,
Might chance to lose his glistering hide ;
Brown Maudlin of that doublet pied
Could make a kirtle rare."

Next, Marmion marked the Celtic race,
Of different language, form, and face,
A various race of man ;
Just then the chiefs their tribes arrayed,
And wild and garish semblance made
The checkered trews and belted plaid,
And varying notes the war-pipes brayed
To every varying clan.
Wild through their red or sable hair
Looked out their eyes with savage stare
On Marmion as he passed ;
Their legs above the knee were bare ;
Their frame was sinewy, short, and spare,

And hardened to the blast ;
Of taller race, the chiefs they own
Were by the eagle's plumage known.
The hunted red-deer's undressed hide
Their hairy buskins well supplied ;
The graceful bonnet decked their head ;
Back from their shoulders hung the plaid ;

A broadsword of unwieldy length,
A dagger proved for edge and strength,
A studded targe they wore,
And quivers, bows, and shafts,—but,
oh !

Short was the shaft and weak the bow
To that which England bore.

The Isles-men carried at their backs
The ancient Danish battle-axe.
They raised a wild and wondering cry,
As with his guide rode Marmion by,
Loud were their clamoring tongues, as
when

The clanging sea-fowl leave the fen
And, with their cries discordant mixed,
Grumbled and yelled the pipes betwixt.

Thus through the Scottish camp they
passed,

And reached the city gate at last,
Where all around, a wakeful guard,
Armed burghers kept their watch and ward.

Well had they cause of jealous fear,
When lay encamped in field so near
The Borderer and the Mountaineer.
As through the bustling streets they go,
All was alive with martial show ;
At every turn with dinning clang

The armorer's anvil clashed and rang,
Or toiled the swarthy smith to wheel
The bar that arms the charger's heel,
Or axe or falchion to the side
Of jarring grindstone was applied,
Page, groom, and squire, with hurrying

pace,
Through street and lane and market-
place,

Bore lance or casque or sword ;
While burghers, with important face,
Described each new-come lord,
Discussed his lineage, told his name,
His following, and his warlike fame.
The Lion led to lodging meet,
Which high o'erlooked the crowded
street ;

There must the baron rest
Till past the hour of vesper tide,
And then to Holy-Rood must ride,—

Such was the king's behest.
Meanwhile the Lion's care assigns
A banquet rich and costly wines
To Marmion and his train ;
And when the appointed hour succeeds,
The baron dons his peaceful weeds,
And following Lindesay as he leads,
The palace halls they gain.

Old Holy-Rood rung merrily
That night with wassail, mirth, and
glee :

King James within her princely bower
Feasted the chiefs of Scotland's power,
Summoned to spend the parting hour ;
For he had charged that his array
Should southward march by break of
day.

Well loved that splendid monarch aye
The banquet and the song,
By day the tourney, and by night
The merry dance, traced fast and light,
The maskers quaint, the pageant bright,
The revel loud and long.

This feast outshone his banquets past ;
It was his blithest—and his last.
The dazzling lamps from gallery gay
Cast on the court a dancing ray ;
Here to the harp did minstrels sing,
There ladies touched a softer string ;
With long-eared cap and motley vest,
The licensed fool retailed his jest ;
His magic tricks the juggler plied ;
At dice and draughts the gallants vied ;
While some, in close recess apart,
Courtied the ladies of their heart,

Nor courted them in vain ;
For often in the parting hour
Victorious Love asserts his power

O'er coldness and disdain ;
And flinty is her heart can view
To battle march a lover true—
Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,
Nor own her share of pain.

Through this mixed crowd of glee and
game

The king to great Lord Marmion came,
While, reverent, all made room.
An easy task it was, I trow,
King James's manly form to know,
Although, his courtesy to show,
He doffed to Marmion bending low

His brodered cap and plume.

For royal were his garb and mien :

His cloak of crimson velvet piled,

Trimmed with the fur of marten wild,

His vest of changeful satin sheen,

The dazzled eye beguiled ;

His gorgeous collar hung adown,

Wrought with the badge of Scotland's
crown,

The thistle brave of old renown ;

His trusty blade, Toledo right,

Descended from a baldrick bright ;

White were his buskins, on the heel

His spurs inlaid of gold and steel ;

His bonnet, all of crimson fair,

Was buttoned with a ruby rare :

And Marmion deemed he ne'er had seen

A prince of such a noble mien.

The monarch's form was middle size,

For feat of strength or exercise

Shaped in proportion fair ;

And hazel was his eagle eye,

And auburn of the darkest dye

His short curled beard and hair.

Light was his footstep in the dance,

And firm his stirrup in the lists ;

And, oh ! he had that merry glance

That seldom lady's heart resists.

Lightly from fair to fair he flew,

And loved to plead, lament and sue,—

Suit lightly won and short lived pain,

For monarchs seldom sigh in vain.

I said he joyed in banquet bower ;

But, mid his mirth, 't was often strange

How suddenly his cheer would change,

His look o'ercast and lower,

If in a sudden turn he felt

The pressure of his iron belt,

That bound his breast in penance pain,

In memory of his father slain.

Even so 't was strange how evermore,

Soon as the passing pang was o'er,

Forward he rushed with double glee

Into the stream of revelry.

Thus dim-seen object of affright
Startles the courser in his flight,
And half he halts, half springs aside,
But feels the quickening spur applied,
And, straining on the tightened rein,
Scours doubly swift o'er hill and plain.

O'er James's heart, the courtiers say,
Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held sway ;

To Scotland's court she came,

To be a hostage for her lord,

Who Cessford's gallant heart had gored,

And with the king to make accord

Had sent his lovely dame.

Nor to that lady free alone

Did the gay king allegiance own ;

For the fair Queen of France

Sent him a turquoise ring and glove,

And charged him, as her knight and love,

For her to break a lance,

And strike three strokes with Scottish
brand,

And march three miles on Southron land

And bid the banners of his band

In English breezes dance.

And thus for France's queen he drest

His manly limbs in mailed vest,

And thus admitted English fair

His inmost councils still to share,

And thus for both he madly planned

The ruin of himself and land !

And yet, the sooth to tell,

Nor England's fair nor France's queen

Were worth one pearl-drop, bright and
sheen,

From Margaret's eyes that fell,—

His own Queen Margaret, who in Lith-
gow's bower

All lonely sat and wept the weary hour.

The queen sits lone in Lithgow pile,

And weeps the weary day

The war against her native soil,

Her monarch's risk in battle broil,—

And in gay Holy-Rood the while

Dame Heron rises with a smile

Upon the harp to play.

Fair was her rounded arm, as o'er

The strings her fingers flew ;

And as she touched and tuned them all,

Ever her bosom's rise and fall

Was plainer given to view ;

For, all for heat, was laid aside

Her wimple, and her hood untied.

And first she pitched her voice to sing,

Then glanced her dark eye on the king,

And then around the silent ring,

And laughed, and blushed, and oft did
say

Her pretty oath, by yea and nay,
 She could not, would not, durst not play !
 At length, upon the harp, with glee,
 Mingled with arch simplicity,
 A soft yet lively air she rung,
 While thus the wily lady sung :—

LOCHINVAR

LADY HERON'S SONG

Oh ! young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
 Through all the wide Border his steed
 was the best ;
 And save his good broadsword he
 weapons had none.
 He rode all unarmed and he rode all
 alone.
 So faithful in love and so dauntless in
 war,
 There never was knight like the young
 Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake and he stopped
 not for stone,
 He swam the Eske river where ford there
 was none,
 But ere he alighted at Netherby gate
 The bride had consented, the gallant
 came late :
 For a laggard in love and a dastard in
 war
 Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Loch-
 invar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
 Among bridesmen, and kinsmen, and
 brothers, and all :
 Then spoke the bride's father, his hand
 on his sword,—
 For the poor craven bridegroom said
 never a word,—
 'Oh ! come ye in peace here, or come ye
 in war,
 Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord
 Lochinvar ?'—

'I long wooed your daughter, my suit
 you denied ;
 Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs
 like its tide—
 And now am I come, with this lost love
 of mine,
 To lead but one measure, drink one cup
 of wine.
 There are maidens in Scotland more
 lovely by far,
 That would gladly be bride to the young
 Lochinvar.'

The bride kissed the goblet ; the knight
 took it up,
 He quaffed off the wine, and he threw
 down the cup.
 She looked down to blush, and she looked
 up to sigh,
 With a smile on her lips and a tear in
 her eye.
 He took her soft hand ere her mother
 could bar,—
 'Now tread we a measure !' said young
 Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her
 face,
 That never a hall such a galliard did
 grace ;
 While her mother did fret, and her
 father did fume,
 And the bridegroom stood dangling his
 bonnet and plume ;
 And the bride-maidens whispered
 'Twere better by far
 To have matched our fair cousin with
 young Lochinvar.'

One touch to her hand and one word in
 her ear,
 When they reached the hall-door, and
 the charger stood near ;
 So light to the croupe the fair lady he
 swung,
 So light to the saddle before her he
 sprung !
 'She is won ! we are gone, over bank,
 bush, and scaur ;
 They'll have fleet steeds that follow,'
 quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of
 the Netherby clan ;
 Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they
 rode and they ran :
 There was racing and chasing on Can-
 nobie Lee,
 But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did
 they see.
 So daring in love and so dauntless in
 war,
 Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young
 Lochinvar ?

The monarch o'er the siren hung,
 And beat the measure as she sung ;
 And, pressing closer and more near,
 He whispered praises in her ear.
 In loud applause the courtiers vied,
 And ladies winked and spoke aside.
 The witching dame to Marion
 threw

A glance, where seemed to reign
 The pride that claims applauses due,
 And of her royal conquest too
 A real or feigned disdain :
 Familiar was the look, and told
 Marmion and she were friends of old.
 The king observed their meeting eyes
 With something like displeased sur-
 prise ;
 For monarchs ill can rivals brook,
 Even in a word, or smile, or look.
 Straight took he forth the parchment
 broad
 Which Marmion's high commission
 showed :
 "Our Borders sacked by many a raid,
 Our peaceful liege-men robbed," he said,
 "On day of truce our warden slain,
 Stout Barton killed, his vessels ta'en—
 Unworthy were we here to reign,
 Should these for vengeance cry in vain ;
 Our full defiance, hate, and scorn,
 Our herald has to Henry borne."

He paused, and led where Douglas stood
 And with stern eye the pageant viewed ;
 I mean that Douglas, sixth of yore,
 Who coronet of Angus bore,
 And, when his blood and heart were
 high,
 Did the third James in camp defy,
 And all his minions led to die
 On Lauder's dreary flat.
 Princess and favorites long grew tame,
 And trembled at the homely name
 Of Archibald Bell-the-Cat ;
 The same who left the dusky vale
 Of Hermitage in Liddisdale,
 Its dungeons and its towers,
 Where Bothwell's turrets brave the air,
 And Bothwell bank is blooming fair,
 To fix his princely bowers.
 Though now in age he had laid down
 His armor for the peaceful gown,
 And for a staff his brand,
 Yet often would flash forth the fire
 That could in youth a monarch's ire
 And minion's pride withstand ;
 And even that day at council board,
 Unapt to soothe his sovereign's mood,
 Against the war had Angus stood,
 And chafed his royal lord.
 His giant-form, like ruined tower,
 Though fallen its muscles' brawny vaunt,
 Huge-boned, and tall, and grim, and
 gaunt,
 Seemed o'er the gaudy scene to lower ;
 His locks and beard in silver grew,
 His eyebrows kept their sable hue.

Near Douglas when the monarch stood,
 His bitter speech he thus pursued :

"Lord Marmion, since these letters say
 That in the North you needs must stay

While slightest hopes of peace remain,
 Uncourteous speech it were and stern
 To say—Return to Lindsfarne,

Until my herald come again.
 Then rest you in Tantallon hold ;
 Your host shall be the Douglas bold,—
 A chief unlike his sires of old.

He wears their motto on his blade,
 Their blazon o'er his towers displayed,
 Yet loves his sovereign to oppose
 More than to face his country's foes.

And, I bethink me, by Saint Stephen,
 But e'en this morn to me was given

A prize, the first fruits of the war,
 Ta'en by a galley from Dunbar,
 A bevy of the maids of heaven.

Under your guard these holy maids
 Shall safe return to cloister shades,
 And, while they at Tantallon stay,
 Requiem for Cochran's soul may say."

And with the slaughtered favorite's
 name

Across the monarch's brow there came
 A cloud of ire, remorse, and shame.

In answer nought could Angus speak,
 His proud heart swelled well-nigh to
 break ;

He turned aside, and down his cheek
 A burning tear there stole.
 His hand the monarch sudden took,
 That sight his kind heart could not
 brook :

"Now, by the Bruce's soul,
 Angus, my hasty speech forgive !
 For sure as doth his spirit live,
 As he said of the Douglas old,

I well may say of you,—
 That never king did subject hold,
 In speech more free, in war more bold,
 More tender and more true ;

Forgive me, Douglas, once again."—
 And, while the king his hand did strain,
 The old man's tears fell down like rain
 To seize the moment Marmion tried,
 And whispered to the king aside :

"Oh ! let such tears unwonted plead
 For respite short from dubious deed !
 A child will weep a bramble's smart,
 A maid to see her sparrow part,
 A stripling for a woman's heart ;
 But woe awaits a country when
 She sees the tears of bearded men.
 Then, oh ! what omen, dark and high,
 When Douglas wets his manly eye !"

Displeased was James that stranger
viewed

And tampered with his changing mood.
"Laugh those that can, weep those that
may."

Thus did the fiery monarch say,
"Southward I march by break of day ;
And if within Tantallon strong
The good Lord Marmion tarries long,
Perchance our meeting next may fall
At Tamworth in his castle-hall."—
The haughty Marmion felt the taunt,
And answered grave the royal vaunt :
"Much honored were my humble home,
If in its halls King James should come ;
But Nottingham has archers good,
And Yorkshire men are stern of mood,
Northumbrian prickers wild and rude.
On Derby Hills the paths are steep,
In Ouse and Tyne the fords are deep ;
And many a banner will be torn,
And many a knight to earth be borne,
And many a sheaf of arrows spent.
Ere Scotland's king shall cross the Trent :
Yet pause, brave prince, while yet you
may !"—

The monarch lightly turned away,
And to his nobles loud did call,
"Lords, to the dance,—a hall ! a hall !"
Himself his cloak and sword flung by,
And led Dame Heron gallantly ;
And minstrels, at the royal order,
Rung out ' Blue Bonnets o'er the Border.'

Leave we these revels now to tell
What to Saint Hilda's maids befell,
Whose galley, as they sailed again
To Whitby, by a Scot was ta'en.
Now at Dun-Edin did they bide
Till James should of their fate decide,
And soon by his command
Were gently summoned to prepare
To journey under Marmion's care,
As escort honored, safe, and fair,
Again to English land.
The abbess told her chaplet o'er,
Nor knew which Saint she should
implore ;
For, when she thought of Constance, sore
She feared Lord Marmion's mood.
And judge what Clara must have felt !
The sword that hung in Marmion's belt
Had drunk De Wilton's blood.
Unwittingly King James had given,
As guard to Whitby's shades,
The man most dreaded under heaven
By these defenceless maids ;
Yet what petition could avail,
Or who would listen to the tale

Of woman, prisoner, and nun,
Mid bustle of a war begun ?
They deemed it hopeless to avoid
The convoy of their dangerous guide.

Their lodging, so the king assigned,
To Marmion's as their guardian, joined ;
And thus it fell that, passing night,
The Palmer caught the abbess' eye,

Who warned him by a scroll
She had a secret to reveal
That much concerned the Church's weal
And health of sinner's soul ;

And, with deep charge of secrecy,
She named a place to meet
Within an open balcony,
That hung from dizzy pitch and high
Above the stately street,
To which, as common to each home,
At night they might in secret come.

At night in secret there they came,
The Palmer and the holy dame.
The moon among the clouds rode high,
And all the city hum was by.
Upon the street, where late before
Did din of war and warriors roar,

You might have heard a pebble fall,
A beetle hum, a cricket sing,
An owlet flap his boding wing
On Giles's steeple tall.
The antique buildings, climbing high,
Whose Gothic frontlets sought the sky,
Were here wrapt deep in shade ;
There on their brows the moonbeam
broke

Through the faint wreaths of silvery
smoke,

And on the casements played.
And other light was none to see,
Save torches gliding far,
Before some chieftain of degree
Who left the royal revelry

To bowne him for the war.—
A solemn scene the abbess chose.
A solemn hour, her secret to disclose.

"O holy Palmer !" she began,—
"For sure he must be sainted man,
Whose blessed feet have trod the ground
Where the Redeemer's tomb is found,—
For his dear Church's sake, my tale
Attend, nor deem of light avail,
Though I must speak of worldly love,—
How vain to those who wed above !—
De Wilton and Lord Marmion wooed
Clara de Clare, of Gloster's blood ;—
Idle it were of Whitby's dame
To say of that same blood I came ;—

And once, when jealous rage was high,
 Lord Marmion said despiteously,
 Wilton was traitor in his heart,
 And had made league with Martin
 Swart

When he came here on Simnel's part,
 And only cowardice did restrain
 His rebel aid on Stokefield's plain,—
 And down he threw his glove. The
 thing

Was tried, as wont, before the king;
 Where frankly did De Wilton own
 That Swart in Guelders he had known,
 And that between them then there
 went

Some scroll of courteous compliment.
 For this he to his castle sent;
 But when his messenger returned,
 Judge how De Wilton's fury burned!
 For in his packet there were laid
 Letters that claimed disloyal aid
 And proved King Henry's cause be-
 trayed.

His fame, thus blighted, in the field
 He strove to clear by spear and
 shield;—

To clear his fame in vain he strove,
 For wondrous are His ways above!
 Perchance some form was unobserved,
 Perchance in prayer or faith he
 swerved,

Else how could guiltless champion quail,
 Or how the blessed ordeal fail?

"His squire, who now De Wilton saw
 As recreant doomed to suffer law,
 Repentant, owned in vain
 That while he had the scrolls in care
 A stranger maiden, passing fair,
 Had drenched him with a beverage
 rare;

His words no faith could gain.
 With Clare alone he credence won,
 Who, rather than wed Marmion,
 Did to Saint Hilda's shrine repair,
 To give our house her livings fair
 And die a vestal votaress there.
 The impulse from the earth was given,
 But bent her to the paths of heaven.
 A purer heart, a lovelier maid,
 Ne'er sheltered her in Whitby's shade,
 No, not since Saxon Edelfled;
 Only one trace of earthly stain,
 That for her lover's loss

She cherishes a sorrow vain,
 And murmurs at the cross.—
 And then her heritage:—it goes
 Along the banks of Tame;

Deep fields of grain the reaper mows,

In meadows rich the heifer lows,
 The falconer and huntsman knows
 Its woodlands for the game.
 Shame were it to Saint Hilda dear,
 And I, her humble votaress here,
 Should do a deadly sin,
 Her temple spoiled before mine eyes,
 If this false Marmion such a prize
 By my consent should win;
 Yet hath our boisterous monarch sworn
 That Clare shall from our house be torn,
 And grievous cause have I to fear
 Such mandate doth Lord Marmion bear.

"Now, prisoner, helpless, and betrayed
 To evil power, I claim thine aid,

By every step that thou hast trod
 To holy shrine and grotto dim,
 By every martyr's tortured limb,
 By angel, saint, and seraphim,
 And by the Church of God!
 For mark: when Wilton was betrayed,
 And with his squire forged letters laid,
 She was, alas! that sinful maid

By whom the deed was done,—
 Oh! shame and horror to be said!

She was—a perjured nun!
 No clerk in all the land like her
 Traced quaint and varying character.
 Perchance you may a marvel deem,
 That Marmion's paramour—

For such vile thing she was—should
 scheme

Her lover's nuptial hour;
 But o'er him thus she hoped to gain,
 As privy to his honor's stain,
 Illimitable power.

For this she secretly retained
 Each proof that might the plot reveal,
 Instructions with his hand and seal;
 And thus Saint Hilda deemed,
 Through sinners' perfidy impure,
 Her house's glory to secure
 And Clare's immortal weal.

"T were long and needless here to tell
 How to my hand these papers fell;

With me they must not stay.
 Saint Hilda keep her abbess true!
 Who knows what outrage he might do
 While journeying by the way?—
 O blessed Saint, if e'er again
 I venturous leave thy calm domain,
 To travel or by land or main,
 Deep penance may I pay!—
 Now, saintly Palmer, mark my prayer:
 I give this packet to thy care,
 For thee to stop they will not dare;
 And oh! with cautious speed

To Wolsey's hand the papers bring,
That he may show them to the king :
And for thy well-earned meed,
Thou holy man, at Whitby's shrine
A weekly mass shall still be thine
While priest can sing and read.—
What ail'st thou?—Speak !"—For as he
took

The charge a strong emotion shook
His frame, and ere reply
They heard a faint yet shrilly tone,
Like distant clarion feebly blown,
That on the breeze did die ;
And loud the abbeſs shrieked in fear,
"Saint Withold, save us !—What is here ;
Look at yon City Cross !
See on its battled tower appear
Phantoms, that scutcheons seem to rear
And blazoned banners toss !"—

Dun-Edin's Cross, a pillared stone,
Rose on a turret octagon ;—
But now is razed that monument,
Whence royal edict rang,
And voice of Scotland's law was sent
In glorious trumpet-clang.
Oh ! be his tomb as lead to lead
Upon its dull destroyers head !—
A minstrel's malison is said.—
Then on its battlements they saw
A vision, passing Nature's law,
Strange, wild, and dimly seen ;
Figures that seemed to rise and die,
Gibber and sign, advance and fly,
While nought confirmed could ear or eye
Discern of sound or mien.
Yet darkly did it seem as there
Heralds and pursuivants prepare,
With trumpet sound and blazon fair,
A summons to proclaim ;
But indistinct the pageant proud,
As fancy forms of midnight cloud
When flings the moon upon her shroud
A wavering tinge of flame ;
It flits, expands, and shifts, till loud,
From midst of the spectre crowd,
This awful summons came :—

"Prince, prelate, potentate, and peer,
Whose names I now shall call,
Scottish or foreigner, give ear !
Subjects of him who sent me here,
At his tribunal to appear
I summon one and all :
I cite you by each deadly sin
That e'er hath soiled your hearts within ;
I cite you by each brutal lust
That e'er defiled your earthly dust,—
By wrath, by pride, by fear,

By each o'er-mastering passion's tone,
By the dark grave and dying groan !
When forty days are passed and gone,
I cite you, at your monarch's throne
To answer and appear."—
Then thundered forth a roll of names :—
The first was thine, unhappy James !
Then all thy nobles came ;
Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose, Argyle,
Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox, Lyle,—
Why should I tell their separate style ?
Each chief of birth and fame,
Of Lowland, Highland, Border, Isle,
Foredoomed to Flodden's carnage pile,
Was cited there by name :
And Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scriverbaye ;
De Wilton, erst of Aberley,
The self-same thundering voice did
say.—

But then another spoke :
"Thy fatal summons I deny
And thine infernal lord defy,
Appealing me to Him on high,
Who burst the sinner's yoke."
At that dread accent, with a scream,
Parted the pageant like a dream,
The summoner was gone.
Prone on her face the abbess fell,
And fast, and fast, her beads did tell ;
Her nuns came, startled by the yell,
And found her there alone.
She marked not, at the scene aghast,
What time or how the Palmer passed.

Shift we the scene.—The camp doth
move ;

Dun-Edin's streets are empty now,
Save when, for weal of those they love,
To pray the prayer and vow the vow,
The tottering child, the anxious fair,
The gray-haired sire, with pious care,
To chapels and to shrines repair.—
Where is the Palmer now ? and where
The abbess, Marmion, and Clare ?—
Bold Douglas ! to Tantallon fair
They journey in thy charge :
Lord Marmion rode on his right hand,
The Palmer still was with the band ;
Angus, like Lindesay, did command
That none should roam at large.
But in that Palmer's altered mien
A wondrous change might now be seen ;
Freely he spoke of war,
Of marvels wrought by single hand
When lifted for a native land,
And still looked high, as if he planned
Some desperate deed afar.
His courser would he feed and stroke,

And, tucking up his sable frock,
Would first his mettle bold provoke,
Then soothe or quell his pride.
Old Hubert said that never one
He saw, except Lord Marmion,
A steed so fairly ride.

Some half-hour's march behind there
came,

By Eustace governed fair
A troop escorting Hilda's dame,
With all her nuns and Clare.

No audience had Lord Marmion sought ;
Ever he feared to aggravate
Clara de Clare's suspicious hate ;

And safer 't was, he thought,
To wait till, from the nuns removed,
The influence of kinsmen loved,
And suit by Henry's self approved,

Her slow consent had wrought.
His was no flickering flame, that dies
Unless when fanned by looks and sighs
And lighted oft at lady's eyes ;
He longed to stretch his wide command
O'er luckless Clara's ample land :
Besides, when Wilton with him vied,
Although the pang of humbled pride
The place of jealousy supplied,
Yet conquest, by that meanness won
He almost loathed to think upon,
Led him, at times, to hate the cause
Which made him burst through honor's
laws.

If e'er he loved, 'twas her alone
Who died within that vault of stone.

And now, when close at hand they saw
North Berwick's town and lofty Law,
Fitz-Eustace bade them pause awhile
Before a venerable pile

Whose turrets viewed afar

The lofty Bass, the Lambie Isle,
The ocean's peace or war.

At tolling of a bell, forth came
The convent's venerable dame,
And prayed Saint Hilda's abbess rest
With her, a loved and honored guest,
Till Douglas should a bark prepare
To waft her back to Whitby fair.
Glad was the abbess, who may guess,
And thanked the Scottish prioress ;
And tedious were to tell, I ween,
The courteous speech that passed be-
tween.

O'erjoyed the nuns their palfreys
leave ;

But when fair Clara did intend,
Like them, from horseback to descend,
Fitz-Eustace said : " I grieve,

Fair lady, grieve e'en from my heart,
Such gentle company to part ;—

Think not discourtesy,
But lords' commands must be obeyed,
And Marmion and the Douglas said
That you must wend with me.

Lord Marmion hath a letter broad,
Which to the Scottish earl he showed,
Commanding that beneath his care
Without delay you shall repair
To your good kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare."

The startled abbess loud exclaimed ;
But she at whom the blow was aimed
Grew pale as death and cold as lead,—
She deemed she heard her death-doom
read.

" Cheer thee, my child ! " the abbess said,
" They dare not tear thee from my hand,
To ride alone with armed band."—

" Nay, holy mother, nay,"
Fitz Eustace said, " the lovely Clare
Will be in Lady Angus' care,

In Scotland while we stay ;
And when we move an easy ride
Will bring us to the English side,
Female attendance to provide
Befitting Gloster's heir ;

Nor thinks nor dreams my noble lord,
By slightest look, or act, or word,
To harass Lady Clare.

Her faithful guardian he will be,
Nor sue for slightest courtesy

That e'en to stranger falls,
Till he shall place her safe and free
Within her kinsman's halls."

He spoke, and blushed with earnest
grace ;

His faith was painted on his face.

And Clare's worst fear relieved,
The Lady Abbess loud exclaimed
On Henry, and the Douglas blamed,

Entreated, threatened, grieved,
To martyr, saint, and prophet prayed,
Against Lord Marmion inveighed,
And called the prioress to aid,
To curse with candle, bell, and book.
Her head the grave Cistercian shook :
" The Douglas and the king," she said,
" In their commands will be obeyed ;
Grieve not, nor dream that harm can
fall

The maiden in Tantallon Hall."

The abbess, seeing strife was vain,
Assumed her wonted state again,—

For much of state she had,—
Composed her veil, and raised her head,
And " Bid," in solemn voice she said,

"Thy master, bold and bad,
The records of his house turn o'er,
And, when he shall there written see
That one of his own ancestry
Drove the monks forth of Coventry,
Bid him his fate explore!
Prancing in pride of earthly trust,
His charger hurled him to the dust,
And, by a base plebeian thrust,
He died his band before.
God judge 'twixt Marmion and me :
He is a chief of high degree,
And I a poor recluse,
Yet oft in holy writ we see
Even such weak minister as me
May the oppressor bruise ;
For thus, inspired, did Judith slay
The mighty in his sin,
And Jael thus, and Deborah "—
Here hasty Blount broke in :
"Fitz-Eustace, we must march our band ;
Saint Anton fire thee ! wilt thou stand
All day, with bonnet in thy hand,
To hear the lady preach ?
By this good light ! if thus we stay,
Lord Marmion for our fond delay
Will sharper sermon teach.
Come, don thy cap and mount thy horse ;
The dame must patience take perforce."

"Submit we then to force," said Clare,
"But let this barbarous lord despair
His purposed aim to win ;
Let him take living, land, and life,
But to be Marmion's wedded wife
In me were deadly sin :
And if it be the king's decree
That I must find no sanctuary
In that inviolable dome
Where even a homicide might come
And safely rest his head,
Though at its open portals stood,
Thirsting to pour forth blood for blood,
The kinsmen of the dead,
Yet one asylum is my own
Against the dreaded hour,—
A low, a silent, and a lone,
Where kings have little power.
One victim is before me there.—
Mother, your blessing, and in prayer
Remember your unhappy Clare !"
Loud weeps the abbess, and bestows
Kind blessings many a one ;
Weeping and wailing loud arose,
Round patient Clare, the clamorous woes
Of every simple nun.
His eyes the gentle Eustace dried,
And scarce rude Blount the sight could
bide,

Then took the squire her rein,
And gently led away her steed,
And by each courteous word and deed
To cheer her strove in vain.

But scant three miles the band had rode,
When o'er a height they passed,
And, sudden, close before them showed
His towers Tantallon vast,
Broad, massive, high, and stretching far,
And held impregnable in war.
On a projecting rock they rose,
And round three sides the ocean flows.
The fourth did battled walls enclose
And double mound and fosse.
By narrow drawbridge, outworks strong,
Through studded gates, an entrance
long,
To the main court they cross.
It was a wide and stately square ;
Around were lodgings fit and fair,
And towers of various form,
Which on the court projected far
And broke its lines quadrangular.
Here was square keep, there turret high,
Or pinnacle that sought the sky.
Whence oft the warder could descry
The gathering ocean-storm.

Here did they rest.—The princely care
Of Douglas why should I declare,
Or say they met reception fair ?
Or why the tidings say,
Which varying to Tantallon came,
By hurrying posts or fleeter fame,
With every varying day ?
And, first, they heard King James had
won
Etall, and Wark, and Ford ; and then,
That Norham Castle strong was ta'en.
At that sore marvelled Marmion,
And Douglas hoped his monarch's hand
Would soon subdue Northumberland ;
But whispered news there came,
That while his host inactive lay,
And melted by degrees away,
King James was dallying off the day
With Heron's wily dame.
Such acts to chronicles I yield ;
Go seek them there and see :
Mine is a tale of Flodden Field,
And not a history.—
At length they heard the Scottish host
On that high ridge had made their post
Which frowns o'er Millfield Plain ;
And that brave Surrey many a band
Had gathered in the Southern land,
And marched into Northumberland,
And camp at Wooler ta'en.

Marmion, like charger in the stall,
That hears, without, the trumpet-call,

Began to chafe and swear :—
“ A sorry thing to hide my head
In castle, like a fearful maid,

When such a field is near.
Needs must I see this battle-day ;
Death to my fame if such a fray
Were fought, and Marmion away !

The Douglas, too, I wot not why,
Hath bated of his courtesy ;
No longer in his halls I'll stay : ”
Then bade his band they should array
For march against the dawning day.

CANTO SIXTH

THE BATTLE

WHILE great events were on the gale,
And each hour brought a varying tale,
And the demeanor, changed and cold,
Of Douglas fretted Marmion bold,
And, like the impatient steed of war,
He snuffed the battle from afar,
And hopes were none that back again
Herald should come from Terouenne,
Where England's king in leaguer lay,
Before decisive battle-day,—
While these things were, the mournful
Clare

Did in the dame's devotions share ;
For the good countess ceaseless prayed
To Heaven and saints her sons to aid,
And with short interval did pass
From prayer to book, from book to mass,
And all in high baronial pride,—
A life both dull and dignified :
Yet, as Lord Marmion nothing pressed
Upon her intervals of rest,
Dejected Clara well could bear
The formal state, the lengthened prayer,
Though dearest to her wounded heart
The hours that she might spend apart.

I said Tantallon's dizzy steep
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.
Many a rude tower and rampart there
Repelled the insult of the air,
Which, when the tempest vexed the sky,
Half breeze, half spray, came whistling
by.

Above the rest a turret square
Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,
Of sculpture rude, a stony shield ;
The Bloody Heart was in the field,
And in the chief three mullets stood,
The cognizance of Douglas blood.
The turret held a narrow stair,
Which, mounted, gave you access where

A parapet's embattled row
Did seaward round the castle go.
Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,
Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,
Sometimes in platform broad extending,
Its varying circle did combine
Bulwark, and bartizan, and line,
And bastion, tower, and vantage-coign.
Above the booming ocean leant
The far-projecting battlement ;
The billows burst in ceaseless flow
Upon the precipice below.
Where'er Tantallon faced the land,
Gate-works and walls were strongly
manned ;

No need upon the sea-girt side :
The steepy rock and frantic tide
Approach of human step denied,
And thus these lines and ramparts rude
Were left in deepest solitude.

And, for they were so lonely, Clare
Would to these battlements repair,
And muse upon her sorrows there,
And list the sea-bird's cry,
Or slow, like noontide ghost, would
glide

Along the dark-gray bulwarks' side,
And ever on the heaving tide
Look down with weary eye.
Oft did the cliff and swelling main
Recall the thoughts of Whitby's fane,—
A home she ne'er might see again ;

For she had laid adown,
So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,
And frontlet of the cloister pale,
And Benedictine gown :

It were unseemly sight, he said,
A novice out of convent shade.—
Now her bright locks with sunny glow
Again adorned her brow of snow ;
Her mantle rich, whose borders round
A deep and fretted broidery bound,
In golden foldings sought the ground ;
Of holy ornament, alone
Remained a cross with ruby stone ;

And often did she look
On that which in her hand she bore,
With velvet bound and broidered o'er,
Her breviary book.

In such a place, so lone, so grim,
At dawning pale or twilight dim,
It fearful would have been
To meet a form so richly dressed,
With book in hand, and cross on breast,
And such a woful mien.

Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow,
To practise on the gull and crow,
Saw her at distance gliding slow,

And did by Mary swear
Some lovelorn fay she might have been,
Or in romance some spell-bound queen,
For ne'er in work-day world was seen
A form so witching fair.

Once walking thus at evening tide
It chanced a gliding sail she spied,
And sighing thought—"The abbess there
Perchance does to her home repair;
Her peaceful rule, where Duty free
Walks hand in hand with Charity,
Where oft Devotion's tranced glow
Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow
That the enraptured sisters see
High vision and deep mystery,—
The very form of Hilda fair,
Hovering upon the sunny air,
And smiling on her votaries' prayer.
Oh! wherefore to my duller eye
Did still the Saint her form deny?
Was it that, seared by sinful scorn,
My heart could neither melt nor burn?
Or lie my warm affections low
With him that taught them first to
glow?

Yet, gentle abbess, well I knew
To pay thy kindness grateful due,
And well could brook the mild com-
mand

That ruled thy simple maiden band.
How different now, condemned to bide
My doom from this dark tyrant's pride!—
But Marmion has to learn ere long
That constant mind and hate of wrong
Descended to a feeble girl
From Red de Clare, stout Gloster's Earl;
Of such a stem a sapling weak,
He ne'er shall bend, although he break.

"But see!—what makes this armor
here?"—

For in her path there lay
Targe, corselet, helm; she viewed them
near.—

"The breastplate pierced!—Ay, much I
fear,
Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's
spear

That hath made fatal entrance here,
As these dark blood-gouts say.—
Thus Wilton! Oh! not corslet's ward,
Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,
Could be thy manly bosom's guard

On yon disastrous day!"—
She raised her eyes in mournful mood,—
Wilton himself before her stood!
It might have seemed his passing ghost,
For every youthful grace was lost,

And joy unwonted and surprise
Gave their strange wildness to his
eyes.—

Expect not, noble dames and lords,
That I can tell such scene in words:
What skillful limner e'er would choose
To paint the rainbow's varying hues,
Unless to mortal it were given
To dip his brush in dyes of heaven?
Far less can my weak line declare

Each changing passion's shade:
Brightening to rapture from despair,
Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,
And joy with her angelic air,
And hope that paints the future fair
Their varying hues displayed;
Each o'er its rival's ground extending,
Alternate conquering, shifting, blend-
ing,

Till all fatigued the conflict yield,
And mighty love retains the field.
Shortly I tell what then he said,
By many a tender word delayed,
And modest blush, and bursting sigh,
And question kind, and fond reply;—

DE WILTON'S HISTORY

"Forget we that disastrous day
When senseless in the lists I lay.

Thence dragged,—but how I cannot
know

For sense and recollection fled,—
I found me on a pallet low
Within my ancient beadsman's shed.
Austin,—remember'st thou, my Clare,
How thou didst blush when the old man,
When first our infant love began,
Said we would make a matchless
pair?—

Menials and friends and kinsmen fled
From the degraded traitor's bed—
He only held my burning head,
And tended me for many a day
While wounds and fever held their sway.
But far more needful was his care
When sense returned to wake despair

For I did tear the closing wound,
And dash me frantic on the ground,
If e'er I heard the name of Clare.
At length, to calmer reason brought,
Much by his kind attendance wrought,

With him I left my native strand,
And, in a palmer's weeds arrayed
My hated name and form to shade,
I journeyed many a land,
No more a lord of rank and birth,
But mingled with the dregs of earth.
Oft Austin for my reason feared,

When I would sit, and deeply brood
On dark revenge and deeds of blood,
Or wild mad schemes upreared,
My friend at length fell sick, and said
God would remove him soon ;
And while upon his dying bed
He begged of me a boon—
If e'er my deadliest enemy
Beneath my brand should conquered lie,
Even then my mercy should awake
And spare his life for Austin's sake.

“ Still restless as a second Cain,
To Scotland next my route was ta'en,
Full well the paths I knew.
Fame of my fate made various sound,
That death in pilgrimage I found,
That I had perished of my wound,—
None cared which tale was true ;
And living eye could never guess
De Wilton in his palmer's dress,
For now that sable slough is shed,
And trimmed my shaggy beard and
head,
I scarcely know me in the glass.
A chance most wondrous did provide
That I should be that baron's guide—
I will not name his name !—
Vengeance to God alone belongs ;
But, when I think on all my wrongs,
My blood is liquid flame !
And ne'er the time shall I forget
When, in a Scottish hostel set,
Dark looks we did exchange :
What were his thoughts I cannot tell,
But in my bosom mustered Hell
Its plans of dark revenge.

“ A word of vulgar augury
That broke from me, I scarce knew
why,
Brought on a village tale,
Which wrought upon his moody sprite,
And sent him armed forth by night.
I borrowed steel and mail
And weapons from his sleeping band ;
And, passing from a postern door,
We met and countered, hand to hand,—
He fell on Gifford-moor.
For the death-stroke my brand I drew,—
Oh ! then my helmed head he knew,
The palmer's cowl was gone,—
Then had three inches of my blade
The heavy debt of vengeance paid,—
My hand the thought of Austin stayed ;
I left him there alone,—
O good old man ! even from the grave
Thy spirit could thy master save :
If I had slain my foeman, ne'er

Had Whitby's abbess in her fear
Given to my hand this packet dear,
Of power to clear my injured fame
And vindicate De Wilton's name.—
Perchance you heard the abbess tell
Of the strange pageantry of hell
That broke our secret speech—
It rose from the infernal shade,
Or feately was some juggle played,
A tale of peace to teach.
Appeal to Heaven I judged best
When my name came among the rest.

“ Now here within Tantallon hold
To Douglas late my tale I told,
To whom my house was known of old.
Won by my proofs, his falchion bright
This eve anew shall dub me knight.
These were the arms that once did turn
The tide of fight on Otterburne,
And Harry Hotspur forced to yield
When the Dead Douglas won the field.
These Angus gave—his armorer's care
Ere morn shall every breach repair ;
For nought, he said, was in his halls,
But ancient armor on the walls,
And aged chargers in the stalls,
And women, priests, and gray-haired
men ;
The rest were all in Twisel glen.
And now I watch my armor here,
By law of arms, till midnight's near ;
Then, once again a belted knight,
Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of light.

“ There soon again we meet, my Clare !
This baron means to guide thee there :
Douglas reveres his king's command,
Else would he take thee from his band.
And there thy kinsman Surrey, too,
Will give De Wilton justice due.
Now meeter far for martial broil,
Firmer my limbs and strung by toil,
Once more”—“ O Wilton ! must we then
Risk new-found happiness again,
Trust fate of arms once more ?
And is there not an humble glen
Where we, content and poor,
Might build a cottage in the shade,
A shepherd thou, and I to aid
Thy task on dale and moor ?—
That reddening brow !—too well I know
Not even thy Clare can peace bestow
While falsehood stains thy name :
Go then to fight ! Clare bids thee go !
Clare can a warrior's feelings know
And weep a warrior's shame,
Can Red Earl Gilbert's spirit feel,
Buckle the spurs upon thy heel

And belt thee with thy brand of steel,
And send thee forth to fame ! ”

That night upon the rocks and bay
The midnight moonbeam slumbering
lay,
And poured its silver light and pure
Through loophole and through embra-
sure

Upon Tantallon tower and hall :
But chief where arched windows wide
Illuminate the chapel's pride
The sober glances fall.

Much was there need ; though seamed
with scars,

Two veterans of the Douglas' wars,
Though two gray priests were there,
And each a blazing torch held high,
You could not by their blaze descry
The chapel's carving fair.

Amid that dim and smoky light,
Checkering the silvery moonshine bright,
A bishop by the altar stood,
A noble lord of Douglas blood,

With mitre sheen and rochet white.
Yet showed his meek and thoughtful eye
But little pride of prelacy ;

More pleased that in a barbarous age
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.

Beside him ancient Angus stood,
Doffed his furred gown and sable hood ;
O'er his huge form and visage pale
He wore a cap and shirt of mail,
And leaned his large and wrinkled hand
Upon the huge and sweeping brand
Which wont of yore in battle fray .
His foeman's limbs to shred away ,
As wood-knife lops the sapling spray.

He seemed as, from the tombs around

Rising at judgment-day,
Some giant Douglas may be found

In all his old array ;
So pale his face, so huge his limb,
So old his arms, his look so grim.

Then at the altar Wilton kneels,
And Clare the spurs bound on his heels ;
And think what next he must have felt
At buckling of the falchion belt !

And judge how Clara changed her hue
While fastening to her lover's side
A friend, which, though in danger tried,

He once had found untrue !

Then Douglas struck him with his blade :
“ Saint Michael and Saint Andrew aid,
I dub thee knight.

Arise, Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir !

For king, for church, for lady fair,
See that thou fight.”
And Bishop Gawain, as he rose,
Said : “ Wilton ! grieve not for thy woes,
Disgrace, and trouble ;

For He who honor best bestows

May give thee double.”

De Wilton sobbed, for sob he must :

“ Where'er I meet a Douglas, trust

That Douglas is my brother ! ”

“ Nay, nay,” old Angus said, “ not so ;

To Surrey's camp thou now must go,

Thy wrongs no longer smother.

I have two sons in yonder field ;

And, if thou meet'st them under shield,

Upon them bravely—do thy worst,

And foul fall him that blanches first ! ”

Not far advanced was morning day

When Marmion did his troop array

To Surrey's camp to ride ;

He had safe-conduct for his band

Beneath the royal seal and hand,

And Douglas gave a guide.

The ancient earl with stately grace

Would Clara on her palfrey place,

And whispered in an undertone,

“ Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown.”

The train from out the castle drew,

But Marmion stopped to bid adieu :

“ Though something I might plain,” he
said,

“ Of cold respect to stranger guest,

Sent hither by your king's behest,

While in Tantallon's towers I stayed,

Part we in friendship from your land,

And, noble earl, receive my hand.”—

But Douglas round him drew his cloak,

Folded his arms, and thus he spoke :—

“ My manors, halls, and bowers shall still

Be open at my sovereign's will

To each one whom he lists, howe'er

Unmeet to be the owner's peer.

My castles are my king's alone,

From turret to foundation-stone—

The hand of Douglas is his own,

And never shall in friendly grasp

The hand of such as Marmion clasp.”

Burned Marmion's swarthy cheek like
fire

And shook his very frame for ire,

And—“ This to me ! ” he said,

“ An 't were not for thy hoary beard,

Such hand as Marmion's had not spared

To cleave the Douglas' head !

And first I tell thee, haughty peer,

He who does England's message here,

Although the meanest in her state,

May well, proud Angus, be thy mate ;
 And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,
 Even in thy pitch of pride,
 Here in thy hold, thy vassals near,—
 Nay, never look upon your lord,
 And lay your hands upon your sword,—
 I tell thee, thou 'rt defied !
 And if thou saidst I am not peer
 To any lord in Scotland here,
 Lowland or Highland, far or near,
 Lord Angus, thou hast lied !”
 On the earl's cheek the flush of rage
 O'ercame the ashen hue of age :
 Fierce he broke forth,—“ And darest thou

then
 To beard the lion in his den,
 The Douglas in his hall ?
 And hopest thou hence unscathed to
 go ?—

No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no !
 Up drawbridge, grooms—what, warder,
 ho !

Let the portcullis fall,—”
 Lord Marmion turned,—well was his
 need,—

And dashed the rowels in his steed,
 Like arrow through the archway sprung
 The ponderous grate behind him rung ;
 To pass there was such scanty room,
 The bars descending razed his plume.

The steed along the drawbridge flies
 Just as it trembled on the rise ;
 Not lighter does the swallow skim
 Along the smooth lake's level brim :
 And when Lord Marmion reached his
 band,

He halts, and turns with clenched hand,
 And shout of loud defiance pours,
 And shook his gauntlet at the towers.
 “ Horse ! horse ! ” the Douglas cried, “ and
 chase ! ”

But soon he reined his fury's pace :
 “ A royal messenger he came,
 Though most unworthy of the name.—
 A letter forged ! Saint Jude to speed !
 Did ever knight so foul a deed ? ”¹

¹ Lest the reader should partake of the Earl's astonishment and consider the crime as inconsistent with the manners of the period, I have to remind him of the numerous forgeries (partly executed by a female assistant) devised by Robert of Artois, to forward his suit against the Countess Matilda ; which, being detected, occasioned his flight into England, and proved the remote cause of Edward the Third's memorable wars in France. John Harding, also, was expressly hired by Edward IV. to forge such documents as might appear to establish the claim of fealty asserted over Scotland by the English monarchs. (*Scott's note.*)

At first in heart it liked me ill
 When the king praised his clerkly skill
 Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,
 Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line ;
 So swore I, and I swear it still,
 Let my boy-bishop fret his fill.—
 Saint Mary mend my fiery mood !
 Old age ne'er cools the Douglas blood,
 I thought to slay him where he stood.
 ’T is pity of him too,” he cried :
 “ Bold can he speak and fairly ride,
 I warrant him a warrior tried.”
 With this his mandate he recalls,
 And slowly seeks his castle halls.

The day in Marmion's journey wore ;
 Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
 They crossed the heights of Stanrig-moor,
 His troop more closely there he scanned,
 And missed the Palmer from the band.
 “ Palmer or not,” young Blount did say,
 “ He parted at the peep of day ;
 Good sooth, it was in strange array.”
 “ In what array ? ” said Marmion quick.
 “ My lord, I ill can spell the trick ;
 But all night long with clink and bang
 Close to my couch did hammers clang :
 At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,
 And from a loophole while I peep,
 Old Bell-the-Cat came from the keep,
 Wrapped in a gown of sables fair,
 As fearful of the morning air ;
 Beneath, when that was blown aside,
 A rusty shirt of mail I spied,
 By Archibald won in bloody work
 Against the Saracen and Turk ;
 Last night it hung not in the hall ;
 I thought some marvel would befall.
 And next I saw them saddled lead
 Old Cheviot forth, the earl's best steed,
 A matchless horse, though something old,
 Prompt in his paces, cool and bold.
 I heard the Sheriff Sholto say
 The earl did much the Master pray
 To use him on the battle-day,
 But he preferred ”—“ Nay, Henry, cease !
 Thou sworn horse-courser, hold thy
 peace.—

Eustace, thou bear'st a brain—I pray,
 What did Blount see at break of day ? ”—

“ In brief, my lord, we both descried—
 For then I stood by Henry's side—
 The Palmer mount and onwards ride

Upon the earl's own favourite steed.
 All sheathed he was in armour bright,
 And much resembled that same knight
 Subdued by you in Cotswold fight ;

Lord Angus wished him speed.”—

The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
A sudden light on Marmion broke :—
“ Ah! dastard fool, to reason lost !”
He muttered ; “ ‘T was nor fay nor ghost
I met upon the moonlight wold,
But living man of earthly mould.

O dotage blind and gross!
Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
My path no more to cross.—
How stand we now ?—he told his tale
To Douglas, and with some avail ;
‘T was therefore gloomed his rugged
brow.—

Will Surrey dare to entertain
‘Gainst Marmion charge disproved and
vain ?

Small risk of that, I trow.
Yet Clare’s sharp questions must I shun,
Must separate Constance from the nun—
Oh! what a tangled web we weave
When first we practise to deceive!
A Palmer too!—no wonder why
I felt rebuked beneath his eye ;
I might have known there was but one
Whose look could quell Lord Marmion.”

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to
speed

His troop, and reached at eve the Tweed,
Where Lennel’s convent closed their
march.

There now is left but one frail arch,

Yet mourn thou not its cells ;

Our time a fair exchange has made :

Hard by, in hospitable shade

A reverend pilgrim dwells,

Well worth the whole Bernardine brood

That e’er wore sandal, frock, or hood.

Yet did Saint Bernard’s abbot there

Give Marmion entertainment fair,

And lodging for his train and Clare.

Next morn the baron climbed the tower,

To view afar the Scottish power,

Encamped on Flodden edge ;

The white pavilions made a show

Like remnants of the winter snow

Along the dusky ridge.

Long Marmion looked :—at length his
eye

Unusual movement might descry

Amid the shifting lines ;

The Scottish host drawn out appears,

For, flashing on the hedge of spears,

The eastern sunbeam shines.

Their front now deepening, now extend-
ing,

Their flank inclining, wheeling, bend-
ing,

Now drawing back, and now descend-
ing,

The skilful Marmion well could know

They watched the motions of some foe

Who traversed on the plain below.

Even so it was. From Flodden ridge

The Scots beheld the English host

Leave Barmore-wood, their evening

post,

And heedful watched them as they
crossed

The Till by Twisel Bridge.¹

High sight it is and haughty, while

They dive into the deep defile ;

Beneath the caverned cliff they fall,

Beneath the castle’s airy wall.

By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-tree.

Troop after troop are disappearing ;

Troop after troop their banners rear-
ing

Upon the eastern bank you see ;

Still pouring down the rocky den

Where flows the sullen Till,

And rising from the dim-wood glen,

Standards on standards, men on men,

In slow succession still,

And sweeping o’er the Gothic arch,

And pressing on, in ceaseless march,

To gain the opposing hill.

That morn, to many a trumpet clang,

Twisel! thy rock’s deep echo rang,

And many a chief of birth and rank,

Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.

Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see

In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,

Had then from many an axe its doom,

To give the marching columns room.

And why stands Scotland idly now,

Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,

¹ On the evening previous to the memorable battle of Flodden, Surrey’s head-quarters were at Barmore-wood, and King James held an inaccessible position on the ridge of Flodden-hill, one of the last and lowest eminences detached from the ridge of Cheviot. The Till, a deep and slow river, winded between the armies. On the morning of the 9th September, 1513, Surrey marched in a northwesterly direction, and crossed the Till, with his van and artillery, at Twisel-bridge, nigh where that river joins the Tweed, his rear-guard column passing about a mile higher, by a ford. This movement had the double effect of placing his army between King James and his supplies from Scotland and of striking the Scottish monarch with surprise, as he seems to have relied on the depth of the river in his front. But as the passage, both over the bridge and through the ford, was difficult and slow, it seems possible that the English might have been attacked to great advantage, while struggling with these natural obstacles.—(Scott).

Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile?
What checks the fiery soul of James?
Why sits that champion of the dames

Inactive on his steed,
And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern
strand,

His host Lord Surrey lead?
What vails the vain knight-errant's
brand?—

O Douglas, for thy leading wand!
Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
Oh! for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skilled Bruce, to rule the fight
And cry, "Saint Andrew and our right!"
Another sight had seen that morn,
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannock-
bourne!—

The precious hour has passed in vain,
And England's host has gained the plain.
Wheeling their march and circling still
Around the base of Flodden hill.

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,
Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,
"Hark! hark! my lord, an English drum!
And see ascending squadrons come

Between Tweed's river and the hill,
Foot, horse, and cannon! Hap what hap,
My basnet to a prentice cap,

Lord Surrey's o'er the Till!—
Yet more! yet more!—how fair arrayed
They file from out the hawthorn shade,
And sweep so gallant by!

With all their banners bravely spread,
And all their armor flashing high,
Saint George might waken from the
dead,

To see fair England's standards fly."—
"Stint in thy prate," quoth Blount,
"thou 'dst best,

And listen to our lord's behest."—
With kindling brow Lord Marmion said,
"This instant be our band arrayed;
The river must be quickly crossed,
That we may join Lord Surrey's host.
If fight King James,—as well I trust
That fight he will, and fight he must,—
The Lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry while the battle joins."

Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Scarce to the abbot bade adieu,
Far less would listen to his prayer
To leave behind the helpless Clare.
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,
And muttered as the flood they view,

"The pheasant in the falcon's claw,
He scarce will yield to please a daw;
Lord Angus may the abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me."

Then on that dangerous ford and deep
Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies creep
He ventured desperately:

And not a moment will he bide
Till squire or groom before him ride;
Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.

Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven per-
force,

The southern bank they gain.
Behind them straggling came to shore,
As best they might, the train:

Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,
A caution not in vain;
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unharmed, should sharply ring.
A moment then Lord Marmion stayed,
And breathed his steed, his men arrayed,

Then forward moved his band,
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a cross of stone,
That on a hillock standing lone
Did all the field command.

Hence might they see the full array
Of either host for deadly fray;
Their marshalled lines stretched east
and west,

And fronted north and south,
And distant salutation passed
From the loud cannon mouth;
Not in the close successive rattle
That breathes the voice of modern battle,
But slow and far between.

The hillock gained, Lord Marmion
stayed:

"Here, by this cross," he gently said,
"You well may view the scene.
Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare:
Oh! think of Marmion in thy prayer!—
Thou wilt not?—well, no less my care
Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare.—
You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,

With ten picked archers of my train;
With England if the day go hard,
To Berwick speed amain.—

But if we conquer, cruel maid,
My spoils shall at your feet be laid,
When here we meet again."
He waited not for answer there,
And would not mark the maid's despair,
Nor heed the discontented look

From either squire, but spurred amain,
And, dashing through the battle-plain,
His way to Surrey took.

"The good Lord Marmion, by my life!
Welcome to danger's hour!—

Short greeting serves in time of strife.—

Thus have I ranged my power:

Myself will rule this central host,

Stout Stanley fronts their right,

My sons command the vaward post,

With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight;

Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,

Shall be in rearward of the fight,

And succor those that need it most.

Now, gallant Marmion, well I know,

Would gladly to the vanguard go:

Elmund, the Admiral, Tunstall there,

With thee their charge will blithely

share;

There fight thine own retainers too

Beneath De Burg, thy steward true."

"Thanks, noble Surrey!" Marmion said,

Nor further greeting there he paid,

But, parting like a thunderbolt,

First in the vanguard made a halt,

Where such a shout there rose

Of "Marmion! Marmion!" that the cry,

Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,

Startled the Scottish foes.

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still

With Lady Clare upon the hill,

On which—for far the day was spent—

The western sunbeams now were bent;

The cry they heard, its meaning knew,

Could plain their distant comrades view:

Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,

"Unworthy office here to stay!

No hope of gilded spurs to-day.—

But see! look up—on Flodden bent

The Scottish foe has fired his tent."

And sudden, as he spoke,

From the sharp ridges of the hill,

All downward to the banks of Till,

Was wreathed in sable smoke.

Volumed and vast, and rolling far,

The cloud enveloped Scotland's war

As down the hill they broke;

Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,

Announced their march; their tread

alone,

At times one warning trumpet blown,

At times a stifled hum,

Told England, from his mountain-throne

King James did rushing come.

Scarce could they hear or see their foes

Until at weapon-point they close.—

They close in clouds of smoke and dust,

With sword-sway and with lance's
thrust;

And such a yell was there,

Of sudden and portentous birth,

As if men fought upon the earth,

And fiends in upper air:

Oh! life and death were in the shout,

Recoil and rally, charge and rout,

And triumph and despair.

Long looked the anxious squires; their

eye

Could in the darkness nought descry.

At length the freshening western blast

Aside the shroud of battle cast;

And first the ridge of mingled spears

Above the brightening cloud appears,

And in the smoke the pennons flew,

As in the storm the white seamew.

Then marked they, dashing broad and

far,

The broken billows of the war,

And plumed crests of chieftains brave

Floating like foam upon the wave;

But nought distinct they see:

Wide raged the battle on the plain;

Spears shook and falchions flashed

amain;

Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;

Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,

Wild and disorderly.

Amid the scene of tumult, high

They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly;

And stainless Tunstall's banner white,

And Edmund Howard's lion bright,

Still bear them bravely in the fight,

Although against them come

Of gallant Gordons many a one,

And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,

And many a rugged Border clan,—

With Huntly and with Home.—

Far on the left, unseen the while,

Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle,

Though there the western mountaineer

Rushed with bare bosom on the spear,

And flung the feeble targe aside,

And with both hands the broadsword

plied.

'T was vain.—But Fortune, on the right,

With fickle smile cheered Scotland's

fight.

Then fell that spotless banner white,

The Howard's lion fell;

Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew

With wavering flight, while fiercer grew

Around the battle-yell.

The Border slogan rent the sky!

A Home! a Gordon! was the cry:

Loud were the clanging blows ;
Advanced,—forced back,—now low,
now high,

The pennon sunk and rose ;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
It wavered mid the foes.

No longer Blount the view could bear :
"By heaven and all its saints ! I swear
I will not see it lost !

Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
May bid your beads and patter prayer,—
I gallop to the host."

And to the fray he rode amain,
Followed by all the archer train.

The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
Made for a space an opening large,—

The rescued banner rose,—
But darkly closed the war around,
Like pine-tree rooted from the ground
It sank among the foes.

Then Eustace mounted too,—yet stayed,
As loath to leave the helpless maid,

When, fast as shaft can fly,
Bloodshot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,

Lord Marmion's steed rushed by ;
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
A look and sign to Clara cast

To mark he would return in haste,
Then plunged into the fight.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,

Left in that dreadful hour alone ;
Perchance her reason stoops or reels ;
Perchance a courage, not her own,

Braces her mind to desperate tone.—
The scattered van of England wheels ;—
She only said, as loud in air

The tumult roared, "Is Wilton there ?"—
They fly, or, maddened by despair,
Fight but to die,—"Is Wilton there ?"

With that, straight up the hill there rode
Two horsemen drenched with gore,
And in their arms, a helpless load,
A wounded knight they bore.

His hand still strained the broken brand ;
His arms where smeared with blood and
sand.

Dragged from among the horses' feet,
With dinted shield and helmet beat,
The falcon-crest and plumage gone,
Can that be haughty Marmion ! . . .
Young Blount his armor did unlace,
And, gazing on his ghastly face,

Said, "By Saint George, he's gone !
That spear-wound has our master sped,
And see the deep cut on his head !

Good-night to Marmion."—
"Unnurtured Blount ! thy brawling
cease :
He opes his eyes," said Eustace ;
"peace !"

When, doffed his casque, he felt free air,
Around gan Marmion wildly stare :
"Where's Harry Blount ? Fitz-Eustace
where ?

Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare !
Redeem my pennon,—charge again !
Cry, 'Marmion to the rescue !'—Vain !
Last of my race, on battle-plain
That shout shall ne'er be heard again !—
Yet my last thought is England's—fly,

To Dacre bear my signet-ring ;
Tell him his squadrons up to bring.—
Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie :

Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
His lifeblood stains the spotless shield ;
Edmund is down ; my life is left ;

The Admiral alone is left.
Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—
With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
Full upon Scotland's central host,
Or victory and England's lost.—
Must I bid twice ?—hence, varlets ! fly !—

Leave Marmion here alone—to die."
They parted, and alone he lay ;
Clare drew her from the sight away,
Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
And half he murmured, "Is there none
Of all my halls have nurst,
Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
Of blessed water from the spring,
To slake my dying thirst !"

O Woman ! in our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made ;
When pain and anguish wring the
brows.

A ministering angel thou !—
Scarce were the piteous accents said,
When with the baron's casque the maid
To the high streamlet ran :
Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears ;
The plaintive voice alone she hears,
Sees but the dying man.
She stooped her by the runnel's side,
But in abhorrence backward drew ;
For, oozing from the mountain's side
Where raged the war, a dark-red tide
Was curdling in the streamlet blue.
Where shall she turn ?—behold her
mark

A little fountain cell,

Where water, clear as diamond spark,
In a stone basin fell.
Above, some half-worn letters say,
Drink. weary. pilgrim. drink. and.
pray.

For. the. kind. soul. of, Sibyl. Grey.
Who. built. this. cross. and. well.
She filled the helm and back she hied,
And with surprise and joy espied
A monk supporting Marmion's head ;
A pious man, whom duty brought
To dubious verge of battle fought,
To shrive the dying, bless the dead.

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,
And, as she stooped his brow to lave—
“ Is it the hand of Clare,” he said,
“ Or injured Constance, bathes my
head ? ”

Then, as remembrance rose,—
“ Speak not to me of shrift or prayer !
I must redress her woes.
Short space, few words, are mine to
spare ;

Forgive and listen, gentle Clare ! ”
“ Alas ! ” she said, “ the while.—
Oh ! think of your immortal weal !
In vain for Constance is your zeal !
She—died at Holy Isle.”—

Lord Marmion started from the ground
As light as if he felt no wound,
Though in the action burst the tide
In torrents from his wounded side.
“ Then it was truth,” he said—“ I knew
That the dark presage must be true.—
I would the Fiend, to whom belongs
The vengeance due to all her wrongs,
Would spare me but a day !

For wasting fire, and dying groan,
And priests slain on the altar stone,
Might bribe him for delay.
It may not be !—this dizzy trance—
Curse on yon base marauder's lance,
And doubly cursed my failing brand !
A sinful heart makes feeble hand.”
Then fainting down on earth he sunk,
Supported by the trembling monk.

With fruitless labor Clara bound
And strove to stanch the gushing
wound :

The monk with unavailing cares
Exhausted all the Church's prayers.
Ever, he said, that, close and near,
A lady's voice was in his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear ;
For that she ever sung.

*‘ In the lost battle borne down by the fly-
ing,*

*Where mingles war's rattle with groans
of the dying ! ”*

So the notes rung,—
“ Avoid thee, Fiend !—with cruel hand
Shake not the dying sinner's sand !—
Oh ! look, my son, upon yon sign
Of the Redeemer's grace divine ;
Oh ! think on faith and bliss !—
By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting seen,
But never aught like this.”
The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swelled the
gale,

And “ Stanley ! ” was the cry.—
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye ;
With dying hand above his head
He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted “ Victory !—
Charge, Chester, charge ! On, Stanley,
on ! ”

Were the last words of Marmion.

By this, though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
For still the Scots around their king,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring,
Where's now their victor vaward wing,
Where Huntley, and where Home ?—

Oh ! for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died !

Such blasts might warn them, not in
vain,

To quit the plunder of the slain
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side
Afar the Royal Standard flies,
And round it toils and bleeds and dies

Our Caledonian pride !
In vain the wish—for far away,
While spoil and havoc mark their way,
Near Sibyl's Cross the plunderers stray.—
“ O lady,” cried the monk, “ away ! ”

And placed her on her steed,
And led her to the chapel fair
Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.

There all the night they spent in prayer,
And at the dawn of morning there
She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.

But as they left the darkening heath
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hailed,
In headlong charge their horse assailed ;

Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons
sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep
That fought around their king.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirl-
winds go,
Though billmen ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like
knight,
As fearlessly and well,
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded king.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shattered bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves from wasted lands
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know;
Their king, their lords, their mightiest
low,
They melted from the field, as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds
blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band
Disordered through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song
Shall many an age that wail prolong;
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife and carnage drear
Of Flodden's fatal field.
Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear
And broken was her shield!

Day dawns upon the mountain's side.—
There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride,
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one;
The sad survivors all are gone.—
View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon Border castle high
Look northward with upbraiding eye;
Nor cherish hope in vain
That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The Royal Pilgrim to his land
May yet return again.

He saw the wreck his rashness wrought
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
And fell on Flodden plain:
And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clenched within his manly hand,
Beseeemed the monarch slain.
But oh! how changed since yon blithe
night!—
Gladly I turn me from the sight
Unto my tale again.

Short is my tale:—Fitz-Eustace' care
A pierced and mangled body bare
To moated Lichfield's lofty pile;
And there, beneath the southern aisle
A tomb with Gothic sculpture fair
Did long Lord Marmion's image bear.—
Now vainly for its site you look;
'T was levelled when fanatic Brook
The fair cathedral stormed and took,
But, thanks to Heaven and good Saint
Chad,
A guerdon meet the spoiler had!—
There erst was martial Marmion found,
His feet upon a couchant hound,
His hands to heaven upraised;
And all around, on scutcheon rich,
And tablet carved, and fretted niche,
His arms and feats were blazed.
And yet, though all was carved so fair,
And priests for Marmion breathed the
prayer.

The last Lord Marmion lay not there.
From Ettrick woods a peasant swain
Followed his lord to Flodden plain,—
One of those flowers whom plaintive lay
In Scotland mourns as "wede away:"
Sore wounded, Sibyl's Cross he spied,
And dragged him to its foot, and died
Close by the noble Marmion's side,
The spoilers stripped and gashed the
slain,
And thus their corpses were mista'en;
And thus in the proud baron's tomb
The lowly woodsman took the room.

Less easy task it were to show
Lord Marmion's nameless grave and low
They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
But every mark is gone:
Time's wasting hand has done away
The simple Cross of Sibyl Grey,
And broke her font of stone;
But yet from out the little hill
Oozes the slender springlet still.
Oft halts the stranger there.
For thence may best his curious eye
The memorable field descry;
And shepherd boys repair

To seek the water-flag and rush,
And rest them by the hazel bush,
And plait their garlands fair,
Nor dream they sit upon the grave
That holds the bones of Marmion
brave.—

When thou shalt find the little hill,
With thy heart commune and be still.
If ever in temptation strong
Thou left'st the right path for the
wrong,

If every devious step thus trod
Still led thee further from the road,
Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom
On noble Marmion's lowly tomb ;
But say, "He died a gallant knight,
With sword in hand, for England's
right."

I do not rhyme to that dull elf
Who cannot image to himself
That all through Flodden's dismal night
Wilton was foremost in the fight,
That when brave Surrey's steed was
slain

'Twas Wilton mounted him again ;
'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hewed
Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood :
Unnamed by Holinshed or Hall,
He was the living soul of all ;
That, after fight, his faith made plain,
He won his rank and lands again,
And charged his old paternal shield,
With bearings won on Flodden Field.
Nor sing I to that simple maid
To whom it must in terms be said
That king and kinsmen did agree
To bless fair Clara's constancy ;
Who cannot, unless I relate,
Paint to her mind the bridal's state,—
That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,
More, Sands, and Denny, passed the joke ;
That bluff King Hal the curtain drew,
And Katherine's hand the stocking
threw ;

And afterwards, for many a day,
That it was held enough to say,
In blessing to a wedded pair,
"Love they like Wilton and like Clare !"

November, 1806—January, 1808.
February 23, 1808.

SOLDIER, REST! THY WARFARE
O'ER

SOLDIER, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows not break-
ing ;
Dream of battled fields no more,

Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more ;
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
Armor's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
Mustering clan or squadron tramping.
Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
At the daybreak from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champ-
ing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping.

Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done ;
While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
Sleep! the deer is in his den ;
Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying :
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen
How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done ;
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye
Here no bugles sound reveillé.

From *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810.

HAIL TO THE CHIEF WHO IN
TRIUMPH ADVANCES!

HAIL to the Chief who in triumph ad-
vances!

Honored and blessed be the ever-green
Pine!

Long may the tree, in his banner that
glances,

Flourish, the shelter and grace of our
line!

Heaven send it happy dew,

Earth lend it sap anew,

Gayly to burgeon and broadly to grow,
While every Highland glen

Sends our shout back again.

"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!
ieroe!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the
fountain,

Blooming at Beltane, in winter to
fade ;
When the whirlwind has stripped every
leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in
her shade.
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow ;
Menteith and Breadalbane, then
Echo his praise again,
" Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho !
ieroe ! "

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen
Fruin,
And Bannochar's groans to our slogan
replied ;
Glen-Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smok-
ing in ruin,
And the best of Loch Lomond lie
dead on her side.
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our raid,
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and
with woe ;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear again,
" Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho !
ieroe ! "

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the
Highlands !
Stretch to your oars for the ever-green
Pine !
O that the rosebud that graces yon is-
lands
Were wreathed in a garland around
him to twine !
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem
Honored and blessed in their shadow
might grow !
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
" Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho !
ieroe ! "

From *The Lady of the Lake*.

W.

CORONACH

HE is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
From the rain-drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow !

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber !
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and forever !
From *The Lady of the Lake*.

HARP OF THE NORTH, FAREWELL !

HARP of the North, farewell ! The hills
grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade de-
scending ;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights
her spark,
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert
wending.
Resume thy wizard elm ! the fountain
lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder min-
strelsy ;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers
blending,
With distant echo from the fold and
lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum
of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel
Harp !
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble
sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp
May idly cavil at an idle lay.
Much have I owed thy strains on life's
long way,
Through secret woes the world has
never known,
When on the weary night dawned
wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief devoured
alone.—
That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress !
is thine own.

Hark ! as my lingering footsteps slow
retire,

Some spirit of the Air has waked thy string !

'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,

'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.

Receding now, the dying numbers ring
Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell ;

And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring

A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—

And now, 'tis silent all !—Enchantress,
fare thee well !

Conclusion of *The Lady of the Lake*.

BRIGNALL BANKS

During the composition of *Rokeby* Scott wrote to Morritt : " There are two or three Songs, and particularly one in Praise of Brignall Banks, which I trust you will like—because, *entre nous*, I like them myself. One of them is a little dashing banditti song, called and entitled Allen-a-Dale."

O, BRIGNALL banks are wild and fair,

And Greta woods are green,

And you may gather garlands there

Would grace a summer queen.

And as I rode by Dalton-hall,

Beneath the turrets high,

A maiden on the castle wall

Was singing merrily :

" O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,

And Greta woods are green ;

I'd rather rove with Edmund there

Than reign our English queen."

" If, maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,

To leave both tower and town,

Thou first must guess what life lead we

That dwell by dale and down.

And if thou canst that riddle read,

As read full well you may,

Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed,

As blithe as Queen of May."

Yet sung she, " Brignall banks are fair,

And Greta woods are green ;

I'd rather rove with Edmund there

Than reign our English queen.

" I read you, by your bugle horn,

And by your palfrey good,

I read you for a ranger sworn

To keep the king's greenwood."

" A ranger, lady, winds his horn,

And 'tis at peep of light ;

His blast is heard at merry morn,

And mine at dead of night."

Yet sung she, " Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay ;

I would I were with Edmund there,
To reign his Queen of May !

" With burnished brand and musketoon
So gallantly you come,

I read you for a bold dragoon,

That lists the tuck of drum."

" I list no more the tuck of drum,

No more the trumpet hear ;

But when the beetle sounds his hum,

My comrades take the spear.

And O, though Brignall banks be fair,

And Greta woods be gay,

Yet mickle must the maiden dare

Would reign my Queen of May !

" Maiden ! a nameless life I lead,

A nameless death I'll die :

The fiend whose lantern lights the mead

Were better mate than I !

And when I'm with my comrades met

Beneath the greenwood bough,

What once we were we all forget,

Nor think what we are now.

Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,

And Greta woods are green,

And you may gather garlands there

Would grace a summer queen."

From *Rokeby*, 1813.

ALLEN-A-DALE

ALLEN-a-Dale has no fagot for burning,

Allen-a-Dale has no furrow for turning,

Allen-a-Dale has no fleece for the spinning,

Yet Allen-a-Dale has red gold for the winning.

Come, read me my riddle ! come, hearken
en my tale !

And tell me the craft of bold Allen-a-Dale,

The Baron of Ravensworth prances in
pride,

And he views his domains upon Arkin
dale side.

The mere for his net and the land for
his game,

The chase for the wild and the park for
the tame :

Yet the fish of the lake and the deer of
the vale

Are less free to Lord Dacre than Allen-
a-Dale !

Allen-a-Dale was ne'er belted a knight,
Though his spur be as sharp and his
blade be as bright ;

Allen-a-Dale is no baron or lord,
 Yet twenty tall yeomen will draw at his
 word;
 And the best of our nobles his bonnet
 will vail,
 Who at Rere-cross on Stanmore meets
 Allen-a-Dale !

Allen-a-Dale to his wooing is come ;
 The mother, she asked of his household
 and home :
 " Though the castle of Richmond stand
 fair on the hill,
 My hall," quoth bold Allen, " shows
 gallanter still ;
 'Tis the blue vault of heaven, with its
 crescent so pale
 And with all its bright spangles !" said
 Allen-a-Dale.

The father was steel and the mother
 was stone ;
 They lifted the latch and they bade him
 be gone ;
 But loud on the morrow their wail and
 their cry :
 He had laughed on the lass with his
 bonny black eye,
 And she fled to the forest to hear a love-
 tale,
 And the youth it was told by was Allen-
 a-dale !

From *Rokeby*, 1813.

HIE AWAY, HIE AWAY

Hie away, hie away,
 Over bank and over brae,
 Where the copsewood is the greenest,
 Where the fountains glisten sheenest,
 Where the lady-fern grows strongest,
 Where the morning dew lies longest,
 Where the black-cock sweetest sips it,
 Where the fairy latest trips it :
 Hie to haunts right seldom seen,
 Lovely, lonesome, cool, and green,
 Over bank and over brae,
 Hie away, hie away.

From *Waverley*, 1814.

TWIST YE, TWINE YE ! EVEN SO

Twist ye, twine ye ! even so,
 Mingle shades of joy and woe,
 Hope and fear and peace and strife,
 In the thread of human life.

While the mystic twist is spinning,
 And the infant's life beginning,

Dimly seen through twilight bending,
 Lo, what varied shapes attending !

Passions wild and follies vain,
 Pleasures soon exchanged for pain ;
 Doubt and jealousy and fear,
 In the magic dance appear.

Now they wax and now they dwindle,
 Whirling with the whirling spindle,
 Twist ye, twine ye ! even so
 Mingle human bliss and woe.

From *Guy Mannering*, 1815.

WASTED, WEARY, WHEREFORE STAY

WASTED, weary, wherefore stay,
 Wrestling thus with earth and clay ?
 From the body pass away ;—
 Hark ! the mass is singing.

From thee doff thy mortal weed,
 Mary Mother be thy speed,
 Saints to help thee at thy need ;—
 Hark ! the knell is ringing.

Fear not snow-drift driving fast,
 Sleet or hail or levin blast ;
 Soon the shroud shall lap thee fast,
 And the sleep be on thee cast
 That shall ne'er know waking.

Haste thee, haste thee, to be gone,
 Earth flits fast, and time draws on,—
 Gasp thy gasp, and groan thy groan,
 Day is near the breaking.

From *Guy Mannering*.

W. JOCK O' HAZELDEAN

" WHY weep ye by the tide, ladie ?
 Why weep ye by the tide ?
 I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
 And ye sall be his bride :
 And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
 Sae comely to be seen"—
 But aye she loot the tears down fa'
 For Jock o' Hazeldean.

" Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
 And dry that cheek so pale ;
 Young Frank is chief of Errington
 And lord of Langley-dale ;
 His step is first in peaceful ha',
 His sword in battle keen"—
 But aye she loot the tears down fa'
 For Jock o' Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;
Nor mettled hound, nor managed
hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you, the foremost o' them a',
Shall ride our forest queen."—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock o' Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-tide,
The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait the
bride,
And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower and
ha';
The ladie was not seen!
She's o'er the Border and awa'
Wi' Jock o' Hazeldean. 1816.

PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU

PIBROCH of Donuill Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuill,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan Conuill.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen and
From mountain so rocky,
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy.
Come every hill-plaid and
True heart that wears one,
Come every steel blade and
Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterred,
The bride at the altar;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges;
Come with your fighting gear;
Broadsword and targe.

Come as the winds come when
Forests are rended;
Come as the waves come when
Navies are stranded:
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set!
Pibroch of Donuill Dhu,
Knell for the onset! 1816.

TIME

"WHY sit'st thou by that ruined hall,
Thou aged carle so stern and gray?
Dost thou its former pride recall,
Or ponder how it passed away?"

"Know'st thou not me?" the Deep
Voice cried:
"So long enjoyed, so oft misused—
Alternate, in thy fickle pride,
Desired, neglected, and accused!"

"Before my breath, like blazing flax,
Man and his marvels pass away!
And changing empires wane and wax,
Are founded, flourish, and decay.

"Redeem mine hours—the space is
brief—
While in my glass the sand-grains
shiver,
And measureless thy joy or grief,
When Time and thou shalt part for-
ever!"

From *The Antiquary*, 1816.

CAVALIER SONG

AND what though winter will pinch
severe
Through locks of gray and a cloak
that 's old,
Yet keep up thy heart, bold cavalier.
For a cup of sack shall fence the cold.

For time will rust the brightest blade,
And years will break the strongest
bow;
Was never wight so starkly made,
But time and years would overthrow.
From *Old Mortality*, 1816.

CLARION

SOUND, sound the clarion, fill the fife!
To all the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.
From *Old Mortality*, 1816.

THE SUN UPON THE WEIRDLAW HILL

"It was while struggling with such languor, on one lovely evening of this autumn [1817], that he composed the following beautiful verses. They mark the very spot of their birth,—namely, the then naked height overhanging the northern side of the Cauldshields Loch, from which Melrose Abbey to the eastward, and the hills of Ettrick and Yarrow to the west, are now visible over a wide range of rich woodland,—all the work of the poet's hand." Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, Chapter 39.

THE SUN UPON THE WEIRDLAW HILL

In Ettrick's vale is sinking sweet;
The westland wind is hush and still,
The lake lies sleeping at my feet.
Yet not the landscape to mine eye
Bears those bright hues that once it bore,
Though evening with her richest dye
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.

With listless look along the plain
I see Tweed's silver current glide,
And coldly mark the holy fane
Of Melrose rise in ruined pride.
The quiet lake, the balmy air,
The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree—
Are they still such as once they were,
Or is the dreary change in me?

Alas! the warped and broken board,
How can it bear the painter's dye?
The harp of strained and tuneless chord,
How to the minstrel's skill reply?
To aching eyes each landscape lowers,
To feverish pulse each gale blows chill;
And Araby's or Eden's bowers
Were barren as this moorland hill.
1817.

w.

PROUD MAISIE

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?"
"When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye."

"Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?"

"The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.

"The glow-worm o'er grave and stone
Shall light thee steady.
The owl from the steeple sing,
'Welcome, proud lady.'"
From *The Heart of Midlothian*, 1818.

TRUE-LOVE, AN THOU BE TRUE

TRUE-LOVE, an thou be true,
Thou hast ane kittle part to play,
For fortune, fashion, fancy, and thou
Maun strive for many a day.

I've kend by mony a friend's tale,
Far better by this heart of mine,
What time and change of fancy avail,
A true love-knot to untwine.
From *The Bride of Lammermoor*, 1819.

REBECCA'S HYMN

WHEN Israel of the Lord beloved
Out from the land of bondage came,
Her fathers' God before her moved,
An awful guide in smoke and flame.
By day, along the astonished lands
The cloudy pillar glided slow;
By night, Arabia's crimsoned sands
Returned the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise,
And trump and timbrel answered keen,
And Zion's daughters poured their lays,
With priest's and warrior's voice between.
No portents now our foes amaze,
Forsaken Israel wanders lone:
Our fathers would not know Thy ways,
And Thou hast left them to their own.

But present still, though now unseen,
When brightly shines the prosperous day,
Be thoughts of Thee a cloudy screen
To temper the deceitful ray!
And O, when stoops on Judah's path
In shade and storm the frequent night,
Be Thou, long-suffering, slow to wrath,
A burning and a shining light!

Our harps we left by Babel's streams.
The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn;
No censer round our altar beams,
And mute are timbrel, harp, and horn.
But Thou hast said, The blood of goat
The flesh of rams I will not prize;

A contrite heart, a humble thought,
Are mine accepted sacrifice.
From *Ivanhoe*, 1818.

BORDER BALLAD

MARCH, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,
Why the deil dinna ye march forward
in order?

March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,
All the Blue Bonnets are bound for
the border,

Many a banner spread,
Flutters above your head,

Many a crest that is famous in story,
Mount and make ready then,
Sons of the mountain glen,

Fight for the Queen and our old Scot-
tish glory.

Come from the hills where your hirsels
are grazing,

Come from the glen of the buck and
the roe;

Come to the crag where the beacon is
blazing.

Come with the buckler, the lance, and
the bow.

Trumpets are sounding,

War-steeds are bounding,

Stand to your arms and march in good
order;

England shall many a day

Tell of the bloody fray,

When the Blue Bonnets came over the
the Border.

From *The Monastery*, 1820.

LIFE

YOUTH! thou wear'st to manhood now;

Darker lip and darker brow,

Statelier step, more pensive mien,

In thy face and gait are seen:

Thou must now brook midnight
watches,

Take thy food and sport by snatches!

For the gambol and the jest

Thou wert wont to love the best,

Graver follies must thou follow,

But as senseless, false, and hollow.

From *The Abbot*, 1820.

COUNTY GUY

AH! County Guy, the hour is nigh,

The sun has left the lea,

The orange flower perfumes the bower,

The breeze is on the sea.

The lark his lay who thrilled all day
Sits hushed his partner nigh:
Breeze, bird, and flower confess the hour,
But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through the
shade,

Her shepherd's suit to hear;

To beauty shy by lattice high,

Sings high-born Cavalier.

The star of Love, all stars above

Now reigns o'er earth and sky;

And high and low the influence know--

But where is County Guy?

From *Quentin Durward*, 1823.

BONNY DUNDEE

To the Lords of Convention 't was Clav-
er'se who spoke,

"Ere the King's crown shall fall there
are crowns to be broke;

So let each Cavalier who loves honor
and me,

Come follow the bonnet of Bonny Dun-
dee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill up
my can,

Come saddle your horses and call up
your men;

Come open the West Port and let
me gang free,

And it's room for the bonnets of
Bonny Dundee!"

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the
street,

The bells are rung backward, the drums
they are beat;

But the Provost, douce man, said, "Just
e'en let him be,

The Gude Town is weel quit of that Deil
of Dundee."

Come fill up my cup, etc.

As he rode down the sanctified bends of
the Bow,

Ilk carline was flying and shaking her
pow;

But the young plants of grace they
looked couthie and slee,

Thinking luck to thy bonnet, thou
Bonny Dundee!

Come fill up my cup, etc.

With sour-featured Whigs the Grass-
market was crammed,

As if half the West had set tryst to be
hanged;

There was spite in each look, there was
fear in each e'e,
As they watched for the bonnets of
Bonny Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

These cowls of Kilmarnock had spits
and had spears,
And lang-hafted gullies to kill caval-
liers;
But they shrunk to close-heads and the
causeway was free,
At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dun-
dee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He spurred to the foot of the proud
Castle rock,
And with the gay Gordon he gallantly
spoke;
"Let Mons Meg and her marrows speak
twa words or three,
For the love of the bonnet of Bonny
Dundee."
Come fill up my cup, etc.

The Gordon demands of him which way
he goes —
"Where'er shall direct me the shade of
Montrose!
Your Grace in short space shall hear
tidings of me,
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonny
Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There are hills beyond Pentland and
lands beyond Forth,
If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's
chiefs in the North;
There are wild Duniewassals three thou-
sand times three,
Will cry *hoigh!* for the bonnet of Bonny
Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"There's brass on the target of barked
bull-hide;
There's steel in the scabbard that dangles
beside;
The brass shall be burnished, the steel
shall flash free,
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny Dun-
dee.
Come fill up my cup, etc.

"Away to the hills, to the caves, to the
rocks —
Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch with the
fox;
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst
of your glee,
You have not seen the last of my bonnet
and me!"
Come fill up my cup, etc.

He waved his proud hand and the
trumpets were blown,
The kettle-drums clashed and the horse-
men rode on,
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Cler-
miston's lee
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonny
Dundee.
Come fill up my cup, come fill up
my can,
Come saddle the horses and call up
the men,
Come open your gates and let me
gae free,
For it's up with the bonnets of
Bonny Dundee!

December, 1825. 1830.

HERE'S A HEALTH TO KING CHARLES

BRING the bowl which you boast,
Fill it up to the brim;
'T is to him we love most,
And to all who love him.
Brave gallants, stand up,
And avaunt ye, base carles!
Were there death in the cup,
Here's a health to King Charles.

Though he wanders through dangers,
Unaided, unknown,
Dependent on strangers,
Estranged from his own;
Though 't is under our breath,
Amidst forfeits and perils,
Here's to honor and faith,
And a health to King Charles!

Let such honors abound
As the time can afford,
The knee on the ground,
And the hand on the sword;
But the time shall come round
When, 'mid Lords, Dukes, and Earls,
The loud trumpet shall sound,
Here's a health to King Charles!

From Woodstock, 1826.

BYRON

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BYRON

LACHIN Y GAIR

AWAY, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens
of roses!

In you let the minions of luxury rove;
Restore me the rocks, where the snow-
flake reposes,

Though still they are sacred to freedom
and love:

Yet, Caledonia, beloved are thy moun-
tains,

Round their white summits though
elements war;

Though cataracts foam 'stead of smooth-
flowing fountains,

I sigh for the valley of dark Loch na
Garr.

Ah! there my young footsteps in infancy
wander'd;

My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was
the plaid;

On chieftains long perish'd my memory
ponder'd,

As daily I strode through the pine-
cover'd glade;

I sought not my home till the day's
dying glory

Gave place to the rays of the bright
polar star;

For fancy was cheer'd by traditional
story,

Disclosed by the natives of dark Loch
na Garr.

"Shades of the dead! have I not heard
your voices

Rise on the night-rolling breath of the
gale?"

Surely the soul of the hero rejoices,

And rides on the wind, o'er his own
Highland vale.

Round Loch na Garr while the stormy
mist gathers,

Winter presides in his cold icy car:

Clouds there encircle the forms of my
fathers;

They dwell in the tempests of dark
Loch na Garr.

"Ill-starr'd, though brave, did no visions
foreboding

Tell you that fate had forsaken your
cause?"

Ah! were you destined to die at Culloden,
Victory crown'd not your fall with
applause:

Still were you happy in death's earthly
slumber,

You rest with your clan in the caves of
Braemar;

The pibroch resounds, to the piper's loud
number,

Your deeds on the echoes of dark Loch
na Garr.

Years have roll'd on, Loch na Garr, since
I left you,

Years must elapse ere I tread you
again:

Nature of verdure and flow'rs has bereft
you,

Yet still are you dearer than Albion's
plain.

England! thy beauties are tame and
domestic

To one who has roved o'er the moun-
tains afar:

Oh for the crags that are wild and
majestic!

The steep frowning glories of dark
Loch na Garr. 1807.¹

MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART

Ζώη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ

MAID of Athens, ere we part,

Give, oh, give me back my heart!

Or, since that has left my breast,

Keep it now, and take the rest!

Hear my vow before I go,

Ζώη μου, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

¹The dates for Byron's poems are made up chiefly from the very full accounts of their writing and publication given in the notes to E. H. Coleridge's splendid edition.

By those tresses unconfined,
 Woo'd by each Ægean wind;
 By those lids whose jetty fringe
 Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
 By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζῶη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;
 By that zone-encircled waist;
 By all the token-flowers that tell
 What words can never speak so well;
 By love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζῶη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
 Think of me, sweet! when alone.
 Though I fly to Istambol,
 Athens holds my heart and soul;
 Can I cease to love thee? No!
Ζῶη μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ. 1810. 1812.

AND THOU ART DEAD, AS YOUNG AND FAIR

"Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari
 quam tui meminisse!"

AND thou art dead, as young and fair
 As aught of mortal birth;
 And form so soft, and charms so rare,
 Too soon return'd to Earth!
 Though Earth received them in her bed
 And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
 In carelessness or mirth,
 There is an eye which could not brook
 A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
 Nor gaze upon the spot;
 There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
 So I behold them not:
 It is enough for me to prove
 That what I loved, and long must love,
 Like common earth can rot;
 To me there needs no stone to tell,
 'Tis Nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last
 As fervently as thou,
 Who didst not change through all the
 past,
 And canst not alter now.
 The love where Death has set his seal,
 Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
 Nor falsehood disavow:
 And, what were worse, thou canst not
 see
 Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours;
 The worst can be but mine;
 The sun that cheers, the storm that
 lowers,
 Shall never more be thine.
 The silence of that dreamless sleep
 I envy now too much to weep;
 Nor need I to repine,
 That all those charms have pass'd away;
 I might have watch'd through long
 decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
 Must fall the earliest prey;
 Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
 The leaves must drop away;
 And yet it were a greater grief
 To watch it withering leaf by leaf,
 Than see it pluck'd to-day;
 Since earthly eye but ill can bear
 To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
 To see thy beauties fade;
 The night that follow'd such a morn
 Had worn a deeper shade;
 Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd,
 And thou wert lovely to the last;
 Extinguish'd, not decay'd;
 As stars that shoot along the sky
 Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
 My tears might well be shed,
 To think I was not near to keep
 One vigil o'er thy bed;
 To gaze, how fondly! on thy face,
 To fold thee in a faint embrace,
 Uphold thy drooping head;
 And show that love, however vain,
 Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
 Though thou hast left me free,
 The loveliest things that still remain,
 Than thus remember thee!
 The all of thine that cannot die
 Through dark and dread Eternity
 Returns again to me,
 And more thy buried love endears
 Than aught except its living years.
February, 1812. 1812.

WHEN WE TWO PARTED

WHEN we two parted
 In silence and tears,
 Half broken-hearted
 To sever for years,

Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame:
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well:
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.
? . . . 1816.

THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS

A TURKISH TALE

"Had we never loved so kindly,
Had we never loved so blindly,
Never met or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted."—BURNS.

CANTO THE FIRST

KNOW ye the land where the cypress and
myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in
their clime?

Where the rage of the vulture, the love
of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to
crime!

Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the
beams ever shine:

Where the light wings of Zephyr, op-
press'd with perfume,

Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gül in her
bloom;

Where the citron and olive are fairest of
fruit,

And the voice of the nightingale never
is mute:

Where the tints of the earth, and the
hues of the sky,
In color though varied, in beauty may
vie,

And the purple of ocean is deepest in
dye;

Where the virgins are soft as the roses
they twine,

And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
'T is the clime of the East; 't is the land
of the Sun—

Can he smile on such deeds as his chil-
dren have done?

Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' fare-
well

Are the hearts which they bear, and the
tales which they tell.

Begirt with many a gallant slave,
Apparell'd as becomes the brave,
Awaiting each his lord's behest
To guide his steps, or guard his rest,
Old Giaffir sate in his Divan:

Deep thought was in his aged eye;
And though the face of Mussulman

Not oft betrays to standers by
The mind within, well skill'd to hide
All but unconquerable pride,
His pensive cheek and pondering brow
Did more than he was wont avow.

"Let the chamber be clear'd."—The
train disappear'd.—

"Now call me the chief of the Haram
guard."

With Giaffir is none but his only son,
And the Nubian awaiting the sire's
award.

"Haroun—when all the crowd that wait
Are pass'd beyond the outer gate,
(Woe to the head whose eye beheld
My child Zuleika's face unveil'd!)
Hence, lead my daughter from her
tower:

Her fate is fix'd this very hour:
Yet not to her repeat my thought;
By me alone be duty taught!"

"Pacha! to hear is to obey."

No more must slave to despot say—
Then to the tower had ta'en his way,
But here young Selim silence brake,

First lowly rendering reverence meet;
And downcast look'd and gently spake,
Still standing at the Pacha's feet:
For son of Moslem must expire,
Ere dare to sit before his sire!

"Father! for fear that thou shouldst chide

My sister, or her sable guide,
Know—for the fault, if fault there be,
Was mine, then fall thy frowns on me—
So lovelily the morning shone,

That—let the old and weary sleep—
I could not; and to view alone
The fairest scenes of land and deep,
With none to listen and reply
To thoughts with which my heart beat high

Were irksome—for whate'er my mood,
In sooth I love not solitude;
I on Zuleika's slumber broke,

And, as thou knowest that for me
Soon turns the Haram's grating key,
Before the guardian slaves awoke
We to the cypress groves had flown,
And made earth, main, and heaven our own!

There linger'd we, beguiled too long
With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song;
Till I, who heard the deep tambour
Beat thy Divan's approaching hour,
To thee, and to my duty true,
Warn'd by the sound, to greet thee flew;

But there Zuleika wanders yet—
Nay, Father, rage not—nor forget
That none can pierce that secret bower
But those who watch the woman's
tower."

"Son of a slave"—the Pacha said—
"From unbelieving mother bred,
Vain were a father's hope to see
Aught that beseeems a man in thee.
Thou, when thine arm should bend the bow,

And hurl the dart, and curb the steed,
Thou, Greek in soul if not in creed,
Must pore where babbling waters flow,
And watch unfolding roses blow.
Would that yon orb, whose matin glow
Thy listless eyes so much admire,
Would lend thee something of his fire!
Thou, who wouldst see this battlement
By Christian cannon piecemeal rent;
Nay, tamely view old Stambol's wall
Before the dogs of Moscow fall,
Nor strike one stroke for life and death
Against the curs of Nazareth!
Go—let thy less than woman's hand
Assume the distaff—not the brand.
But, Haroun!—to my daughter speed!
And hark—of thine own head take heed—
If thus Zuleika oft takes wing—
Thou see'st yon bow—it hath a string!"

No sound from Selim's lip was heard,
At least that met old Giaffir's ear.
But every frown and every word
Pierced keener than a Christian's sword.
"Son of a slave!—reproach'd with fear!

Those gibes had cost another dear.
Son of a slave!—and *who* my sire?"
Thus held his thoughts their dark career;

And glances ev'n of more than ire
Flash forth, then faintly disappear.
Old Giaffir gazed upon his son
And started; for within his eye
He read how much his wrath had done;
He saw rebellion there begun:

"Come hither, boy—what, no reply?
I mark thee—and I know thee too;
But there be deeds thou dar'st not do:
But if thy beard had manlier length,
And if thy hand had skill and strength,
I'd joy to see thee break a lance,
Albeit against my own perchance."

As sneeringly these accents fell,
On Selim's eye he fiercely gazed:
That eye return'd him glance for glance
And proudly to his sire was raised,
Till Giaffir's quail'd and shrunk as-
kance—

And why—he felt, but durst not tell.
"Much I misdoubt this wayward boy
Will one day work me more annoy:
I never loved him from his birth,
And—but his arm is little worth,
And scarcely in the chase could cope
With timid fawn or antelope,
Far less would venture into strife
Where man contends for fame and life—
I would not trust that look or tone:
No—nor the blood so near my own.
That blood—he hath not heard—no
more—

I'll watch him closer than before.
He is an Arab to my sight,
Or Christian crouching in the fight—
But hark!—I hear Zuleika's voice;
Like Houris' hymn it meets mine ear;
She is the offspring of my choice;
Oh! more than ev'n her mother dear,
With all to hope, and nought to fear—
My Peri! ever welcome here!
Sweet, as the desert fountain's wave
To lips just cool'd in time to save—

Such to my longing sight art thou.
Nor can they wait to Mecca's shrine
More thanks for life, than I for thine,
Who blest thy birth and bless thee
now."

Fair, as the first that fell of womankind,
When on that dread yet lovely serpent
smiling,

Whose image then was stamp'd upon
her mind—

But once beguil'd—and ever more be-
guiling;

Dazzling, as that, oh! too transcendent
vision

To Sorrow's phantom-peopled slumber
given,

When heart meets heart again in dreams
Elysian,

And paints the lost on Earth revived
in Heaven;

Soft, as the memory of buried love;

Pure, as the prayer which Childhood
wafts above

Was she—the daughter of that rude old
Chief,

Who met the maid with tears—but not
of grief.

Who hath not proved how feebly words
essay

To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly
ray?

Who doth not feel, until his failing
sight

Faints into dimness with its own de-
light,

His changing cheek, his sinking heart
confess

The might, the majesty of Loveliness?

Such was Zuleika, such around her
shone

The nameless charms unmark'd by her
alone—

The light of love, the purity of grace,

The mind, the Music breathing from
her face,

The heart whose softness harmonized
the whole,

And oh! that eye was in itself a Soul!

Her graceful arms in meekness bending

Across her gently budding breast;

At one kind word those arms extending

To clasp the neck of him who blest

His child caressing and carest,

Zuleika came—and Giaffir felt

His purpose half within him melt;

Not that against her fancied weal

His heart though stern could ever feel;

Affection chain'd her to that heart;

Ambition tore the links apart.

"Zuleika! child of gentleness!

How dear this very day must tell,

When I forget my own distress,

In losing what I love so well,

To bid thee with another dwell:

Another! and a braver man

Was never seen in battle's van.

We Moslem reck not much of blood;

But yet the line of Carasman

Unchanged, unchangeable hath stood

First of the bold Timariot bands

That won and well can keep their lands.

Enough that he who comes to woo

Is kinsman of the Bey Oglou:

His years need scarce a thought employ;

I would not have thee wed a boy.

And thou shalt have a noble dower:

And his and my united power

Will laugh to scorn the death-firman,

Which others tremble but to scan,

And teach the messenger what fate

The bearer of such boon may wait.

And now thou know'st thy father's will:

All that thy sex hath need to know:

'T was mine to teach obedience still—

The way to love, thy lord may show."

In silence bow'd the virgin's head;

And if her eye was fill'd with tears

That stifled feeling dare not shed,

And changed her cheek from pale to
red,

And red to pale, as through her ears

Those winged words like arrows sped,

What could such be but maiden fears!

So bright the tear in Beauty's eye,

Love half regrets to kiss it dry;

So sweet the blush of Bashfulness,

Even Pity scarce can wish it less!

Whate'er it was the sire forgot;

Or if remember'd, mark'd it not;

Thrice clapp'd his hands, and call'd his
steed,

Resign'd his gem-adorn'd chibouque,

And mounting featly for the mead,

With Maugrabee and Mamaluke.

His way amid his Delis took.

To witness many an active deed

With sabre keen, or blunt jerreed.

The Kislar only and his Moors

Watch well the Haram's massy doors.

His head was leant upon his hand,

His eye look'd o'er the dark blue
water

That swiftly glides and gently swells

Between the winding Dardanelles;

But yet he saw nor sea nor strand,

Nor even his Pacha's turban'd band

Mix in the game of mimic slaughter,

Careering cleave the folded felt.

With sabre stroke right sharply dealt;
Nor mark'd the javelin-darting crowd—
Nor heard their Ollahs wild and loud—
He thought but of old Giaffir's
daughter!

No word from Selim's bosom broke;
One sigh Zuleika's thought bespoke:
Still gazed he through the lattice grate,
Pale, mute, and mournfully sedate.
To him Zuleika's eye was turn'd,
But little from his aspect learn'd:
Equal her grief, yet not the same;
Her heart confess'd a gentler flame:
But yet that heart, alarm'd or weak,
She knew not why, forbade to speak.
Yet speak she must—but when essay?
“How strange he thus should turn
away!

Not thus we e'er before have met;
Nor thus shall be our parting yet.”
Thrice paced she slowly through the
room,

And watch'd his eye—it still was fix'd:
She snatch'd the urn wherein was
mix'd

The Persian Atar-gul's perfume,
And sprinkled all its odors o'er
The pictured roof and marble floor:
The drops, that through his glittering
vest

The playful girl's appeal address'd,
Unheeded o'er his bosom flew,
As if that breast were marble too.
“What, sullen yet? it must not be—
Oh! gentle Selim, this from thee!”
She saw in curious order set

The fairest flowers of eastern land—
“He loved them once: may touch them
yet,

If offer'd by Zuleika's hand.”

The childish thought was hardly brea-
thed

Before the rose was pluck'd and wrea-
th'd;

The next fond moment saw her seat
Her fairy form at Selim's feet:
“This rose to calm my brother's cares
A message from the Bulbul bears;
It says to-night he will prolong
For Selim's ear his sweetest song;
And though his note is somewhat sad,
He'll try for once a strain more glad,
With some faint hope his alter'd lay
May sing these gloomy thoughts away.

“What! not receive my foolish flower?
Nay then I am indeed unblest:
On me can thus thy forehead lower?

And know'st thou not who loves thee
best?

Oh, Selim dear! oh, more than dearest!
Say, is it me thou hat'st or fearest?
Come, lay thy head upon my breast,
And I will kiss thee into rest,
Since words of mine, and songs must
fail,

Ev'n from my fabled nightingale.
I knew our sire at times was stern,
But this from thee had yet to learn:
Too well I know he loves thee not;
But is Zuleika's love forgot?

Ah! deem I right? the Pacha's plan—
This kinsman Bey of Carasman
Perhaps may prove some foe of thine.
If so, I swear by Mecca's shrine,—

If shrines that ne'er approach allow
To woman's step, admit her vow,—
Without thy free consent, command,
The Sultan should not have my hand!
Think'st thou that I could bear to part
With thee, and learn to halve my heart?
Ah! were I sever'd from thy side,
Where were thy friend—and who my
guide?

Years have not seen, Time shall not see,
The hour that tears my soul from thee:
Ev'n Azrael, from his deadly quiver

When flies that shaft, and fly it must,
That parts all else, shall doom for ever
Our hearts to undivided dust!”

He lived, he breathed, he moved, he felt;
He raised the maid from where she
knelt;

His trance was gone, his keen eye shone
With thoughts that long in darkness
dwelt:

With thoughts that burn—in rays that
melt.

As the stream late conceal'd
By the fringe of its willows,
When it rushes reveal'd
In the light of its billows;
As the bolt bursts on high
From the black cloud that bound it,
Flash'd the soul of that eye

Through the long lashes round it.
A war-horse at the trumpet's sound,
A lion roused by heedless hound,
A tyrant waked to sudden strife
By graze of ill-directed knife,
Starts not to more convulsive life
Than he, who heard that vow, display'd,
And all, before repress'd, betray'd:
“Now thou art mine, for ever mine,
With life to keep, and scarce with life
resign;

Now thou art mine, that sacred oath,
Though sworn by one, hath bound us
both.

Yes, fondly, wisely hast thou done;
That vow hath saved more heads than
one:

But blench not thou—thy simplest tress
Claims more from me than tenderness;
I would not wrong the slenderest hair
That clusters round thy forehead fair,
For all the treasures buried far
Within the caves of Istakar.

This morning clouds upon me lower'd,
Reproaches on my head were shower'd,
And Giaffir almost call'd me coward!
Now I have motive to be brave;

The son of his neglected slave,
Nay, start not, 'twas the term he gave,
May show, though little apt to vaunt,
A heart his words nor deeds can daunt.
His son, indeed!—yet, thanks to thee,
Perchance I am, at least shall be;

But let our plighted secret vow
Be only known to us as now.

I know the wretch who dares demand
From Giaffir thy reluctant hand;
More ill-got wealth, a meaner soul
Holds not a Musselim's control:

Was he not bred in Egripo?
A viler race let Israel show!
But let that pass—to none be told
Our oath; the rest shall time unfold.
To me and mine leave Osman Bey;
I've partisans for peril's day:
Think not I am what I appear;
I've arms, and friends, and vengeance
near."

"Think not thou art what thou appearest!

My Selim, thou art sadly changed:
This morn I saw thee gentlest, dearest;
But now thou'rt from thyself es-
tranged.

My love thou surely knew'st before,
It ne'er was less, nor can be more.

To see thee, hear thee, near thee stay,
And hate the night I know not why,
Save that we meet not but by day;

With thee to live, with thee to die,
I dare not to my hope deny:

Thy cheek, thine eyes, thy lips to kiss,
Like this—and this—no more than this;
For, Allah! sure thy lips are flame:

What fever in thy veins is flushing?
My own have nearly caught the same,

At least I feel my cheek, too, blushing.
To soothe thy sickness, watch thy health,
Partake, but never waste thy wealth,
Or stand with smiles unmurmuring by,

And lighten half thy poverty;
Do all but close thy dying eye,
For that I could not live to try;
To these alone my thoughts aspire:
More can I do? or thou require?
But, Selim, thou must answer why
We need so much of mystery?
The cause I cannot dream nor tell,
But be it, since thou say'st 'tis well;
Yet what thou mean'st by 'arms' and
'friends,'

Beyond my weaker sense extends.
I meant that Giaffir should have heard
The very vow I plighted thee;
His wrath would not revoke my word:
But surely he would leave me free.
Can this fond wish seem strange in
me,

To be what I have ever been?
What other hath Zuleika seen
From simple childhood's earliest hour?

What other can she seek to see
Than thee, companion of her bower,
The partner of her fancy?
These cherish'd thoughts with life begun,
Say, why must I no more avow?
What change is wrought to make me
shun

The truth; my pride, and thine till
now?

To meet the gaze of stranger's eyes
Our law, our creed, our God denies;
Nor shall one wandering thought of mine
At such, our Prophet's will, repine:
No! happier made by that decree,
He left me all in leaving thee.
Deep were my anguish, thus compell'd
To wed with one I ne'er beheld:

This wherefore should I not reveal?
Why wilt thou urge me to conceal?

I know the Pacha's haughty mood
To thee hath never boded good;
And he so often storms at nought,
Allah! forbid that e'er he ought!
And why I know not, but within
My heart concealment weighs like sin.
If then such secrecy be crime,

And such it feels while lurking here;
Oh, Selim! tell me yet in time,

Nor leave me thus to thoughts of fear.
Ah! yonder see the Tchocadar,

My father leaves the mimic war;
I tremble now to meet his eye—
Say, Selim, canst thou tell me why?"

"Zuleika—to thy tower's retreat
Betake thee—Giaffir I can greet!
And now with him I fain must prate
Of firmans, imposts, levies, state.

There's fearful news from Danube's banks,

Our Vizier nobly thins his ranks,
For which the Giaour may give him thanks !

Our Sultan hath a shorter way

Such costly triumph to repay.

But, mark me, when the twilight drum
Hath warn'd the troops to food and sleep,

Unto thy cell will Selim come :

Then softly from the Haram creep
Where we may wander by the deep :

Our garden battlements are steep ;
Nor these will rash intruder climb
To list our words, or stint our time ;
And if he doth, I want not steel
Which some have felt, and more may feel.

Then shalt thou learn of Selim more
Than thou hast heard or thought before :

Trust me, Zuleika—fear not me !

Thou know'st I hold a Haram key."

"Fear thee, my Selim ! ne'er till now
Did word like this——"

"Delay not thou :

I keep the key—and Haroun's guard
Have *some*, and hope of *more* reward.
To-night, Zuleika, thou shalt hear
My tale, my purpose, and my fear :
I am not, love ! what I appear."

CANTO THE SECOND

THE winds are high on Helle's wave,

As on that night of stormy water
When Love, who sent, forgot to save
The young, the beautiful, the brave.

The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter,

Oh ! when alone along the sky
Her turret-torch was blazing high,
Though rising gale, and breaking foam,
And shrieking sea-birds warn'd him home ;

And clouds aloft and tides below,
With signs and sounds, forbade to go,
He could not see, he would not hear,
Or sound or sign foreboding fear ;
His eye but saw that light of love,
The only star it hail'd above ;
His ear but rang with Hero's song,
"Ye waves, divide not lovers long !"——
That tale is old, but love anew
May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

The winds are high, and Helle's tide
Rolls darkly heaving to the main ;

And Night's descending shadows hide
That field with blood bedew'd in vain,

The desert of old Priam's pride ;

The tombs, sole relics of his reign,
All—save immortal dreams that could
beguile

The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle !

Oh ! yet—for there my steps have been ;
These feet have press'd the sacred
shore,

These limbs that buoyant wave hath
borne—

Minstrel ! with thee to muse, to mourn,

To trace again those fields of yore,

Believing every hillock green

Contains no fabled hero's ashes,

And that around the undoubted scene

Thine own "broad Hellespont" still
dashes,

Be long my lot ! and cold were he

Who there could gaze denying thee !

The night hath closed on Helle's stream,

Nor yet hath risen on Ida's hill

That moon, which shone on his high
theme :

No warrior chides her peaceful beam

But conscious shepherds bless it still.

Their flocks are grazing on the mound

Of him who felt the Dardan arrow :

That mighty heap of gather'd ground

Which Ammon's son ran proudly round,

By nations raised, by monarchs crown'd,

Is now a lone and nameless barrow !

Within—thy dwelling-place how nar-
row !

Without—can only strangers breathe

The name of him that *was* beneath :

Dust long outlasts the storied stone ;

But Thou—thy very dust is gone !

Late, late to-night will Dian cheer

The swain, and chase the boatman's
fear ;

Till then—no beacon on the cliff

May shape the course of struggling skiff ;

The scatter'd lights that skirt the bay,

All, one by one, have died away ;

The only lamp of this lone hour

Is glimmering in Zuleika's tower.

Yes ! there is light in that lone chamber,

And o'er her silken ottoman

Are thrown the fragrant beads of amber,

O'er which her fairy fingers ran ;

Near these, with emerald rays beset,

(How could she thus that gem forget ?)

Her mother's sainted amulet,

Whereon engraved the Koorsee text,
Could smooth this life, and win the
next;

And by her comboloio lies
A Koran of illumined dyes;
And many a bright emblazon'd rhyme
By Persian scribes redeem'd from time;
And o'er those scrolls, not oft so mute,
Reclines her now neglected lute;
And round her lamp of fretted gold
Bloom flowers in urns of China's mould;
The richest work of Iran's loom,
And Sheerāz, tribute of perfume;
All that can eye or sense delight

Are gather'd in that gorgeous room:
But yet it hath an air of gloom
She, of this Peri cell the sprite,
What doth she hence, and on so rude a
night?

Wrapt in the darkest sable vest,
Which none save noblest Moslem wear,
To guard from winds of heaven the
breast

As heaven itself to Selim dear,
With cautious steps the thicket thread-
ing,

And starting off, as through the glade
The gust its hollow moanings made,
Till on the smoother pathway treading,
More free her timid bosom beat,
The maid pursued her silent guide;
And though her terror urged retreat,
How could she quit her Selim's side?
How teach her tender lips to chide?

They reach'd at length a grotto, hewn
By nature, but enlarged by art,
Where oft her lute she wont to tune,
And oft her Koran conn'd apart;
And oft in youthful reverie
She dream'd what Paradise might be:
Where woman's parted soul shall go
Her Prophet had disdain'd to show;
But Selim's mansion was secure,
Nor deem'd she, could he long endure
His bower in other worlds of bliss
Without *her*, most beloved in this!
Oh! who so dear with him could dwell?
What Houri soothe him half so well?

Since last she visited the spot
Some change seem'd wrought within the
grot:

It might be only that the night
Disguised things seen by better light:
That brazen lamp but dimly threw
A ray of no celestial hue;
But in a nook within the cell

Her eye on stranger objects fell.
There arms were piled, not such as wield
The turban'd Delis in the field;
But brands of foreign blade and hilt,
And one was red—perchance with guilt!
Ah! how without can blood be spilt?
A cup too on the board was set
That did not seem to hold sherbet.
What may this mean? she turn'd to see
Her Selim—"Oh! can this be he?"

His robe of pride was thrown aside,
His brow no high-crown'd turban bore,
But in its stead a shawl of red,
Wreathed lightly round, his temples
wore:

That dagger, on whose hilt the gem
Were worthy of a diadem,
No longer glitter'd at his waist,
Where pistols unadorn'd were braced;
And from his belt a sabre swung,
And from his shoulder loosely hung
The cloak of white, the thin capote
That decks the wandering Candiot;
Beneath—his golden plated vest
Clung like a cuirass to his breast;
The greaves below his knee that wound
With silvery scales were sheathed and
bound.

But were it not that high command
Spake in his eye, and tone, and hand,
All that a careless eye could see
In him was some young Galiongée.¹

"I said I was not what I seem'd;
And now thou see'st my words were
true:

I have a tale thou hast not dream'd,
If sooth—its truth must others rue.
My story now 't were vain to hide,
I must not see thee Osman's bride:
But had not thine own lips declared
How much of that young heart I shared,
I could not, must not, yet have shown
The darker secret of my own.
In this I speak not now of love;
That, let time, truth, and peril prove:
But first—Oh! never wed another—
Zuleika! I am not thy brother!"

"Oh! not my brother!—yet unsay—
God! am I left alone on earth
To mourn—I dare not curse—the day
That saw my solitary birth?
Oh! thou wilt love me now no more.
My sinking heart foreboded ill;
But know *me* all I was before,

¹ A Turkish sailor.

Thy sister—friend—Zuleika still.
 Thou led'st me here perchance to kill ;
 If thou hast cause for vengeance, see !
 My breast is offer'd—take thy fill !
 Far better with the dead to be
 Than live thus nothing now to thee !
 Perhaps far worse, for now I know
 Why Giaffir alway seem'd thy foe ;
 And I, alas ! am Giaffir's child,
 For whom thou wert contemn'd, reviled.
 If not thy sister—wouldst thou save
 My life, oh ! bid me be thy slave !”

“ My slave, Zuleika !—nay, I'm thine :
 But, gentle love, this transport calm,
 Thy lot shall yet be link'd with mine ;
 I swear it by our Prophet's shrine,
 And be that thought thy sorrow's
 balm.

So may the Koran verse display'd
 Upon its steel direct my blade,
 In danger's hour to guard us both,
 As I preserve that awful oath !

The name in which thy heart hath prided
 Must change ; but, my Zuleika, know,
 That tie is widen'd, not divided,
 Although thy Sire's my deadliest foe.

My father was to Giaffir all
 That Selim late was deem'd to thee :
 That brother wrought a brother's fall,
 But spared, at least, my infancy ;
 And lull'd me with a vain deceit
 That yet a like return may meet.

He rear'd me, not with tender help,
 But like the nephew of a Cain ;
 He watched me like a lion's whelp,
 That gnaws and yet may break his
 chain.

My father's blood in every vein
 Is boiling ; but for thy dear sake
 No present vengeance will I take ;
 Though here I must no more remain.
 But first, beloved Zuleika ! hear
 How Giaffir wrought this deed of fear.

“ How first their strife to rancor grew,
 If love or envy made them foes,
 It matters little if I knew ;
 In fiery spirits, slights, though few
 And thoughtless, will disturb repose.

In war Abdallah's arm was strong,
 Remember'd yet in Bosniac song,
 And Paswan's rebel hordes attest
 How little love they bore such guest :
 His death is all I need relate,
 The stern effect of Giaffir's hate ;
 And how my birth disclosed to me,
 Whate'er beside it makes, hath made me
 free.

“ When Paswan, after years of strife,
 At last for power, but first for life,
 In Widdin's walls too proudly sate,
 Our Pachas rallied round the state ;
 Nor last nor least in high command,
 Each brother led a separate band ;
 They gave their horse-tails¹ to the wind,
 And mustering in Sophia's plain
 Their tents were pitch'd, their post as-
 sign'd ;

To one, alas ! assign'd in vain !
 What need of words ! the deadly bowl,
 By Giaffir's order drugged and given,
 With venom subtle as his soul,
 Dismiss'd Abdallah's hence to heaven.
 Reclined and feverish in the bath,
 He, when the hunter's sport was up,
 But little deem'd a brother's wrath
 To quench his thirst had such a cup :
 The bowl a bribed attendant bore ;
 He drank one draught, nor needed more !
 If thou my tale, Zuleika, doubt,
 Call Haroun—he can tell it out.

“ The deed once done, and Paswan's feud
 In part suppress'd, though ne'er subdued,
 Abdallah's Pachalick was gain'd :—
 Thou know'st not what in our Divan
 Can wealth procure for worse than man—
 Abdallah's honors were obtain'd ;
 By him a brother's murder stain'd ;
 'T is true, the purchase nearly drain'd
 His ill got treasure, soon replaced.
 Wouldst question whence ? Survey the
 waste,

And ask the squalid peasant how
 His gains repay his broiling brow !—
 Why me the stern usurper spared,
 Why thus with me his palace shared,
 I know not. Shame, regret, remorse,
 And little fear from infant's force ;
 Besides, adoption as a son
 By him whom Heaven accorded none,
 Or some unknown cabal, caprice,
 Preserved me thus ;—but not in peace :
 He cannot curb his haughty mood,
 Nor I forgive a father's blood.

“ Within thy father's house are foes ;
 Not all who break his bread are true ;
 To these should I my birth disclose,
 His days, his very hours were few ;
 They only want a heart to lead,
 A hand to point them to the deed.
 But Haroun only knows, or knew,
 This tale, whose close is almost nigh :

¹ “ Horse-tail,” the standard of a pacha.
 (Byron.)

He in Abdallah's palace grew,
 And held that post in his Serai
 Which holds he here—he saw him die ;
 But what could single slavery do ?
 Avenge his lord ? alas ! too late ;
 Or save his son from such a fate ?
 He chose the last, and when elate
 With foes subdued, or friends betray'd,
 Proud Giaffir in high triumph sate,
 He led me helpless to his gate,
 And not in vain it seems essay'd
 To save the life for which he pray'd.
 The knowledge of my birth secured
 From all and each, but most from me ;
 Thus Giaffir's safety was insured.
 Removed he too from Roumelie
 To this our Asiatic side,
 Far from our seats by Danube's tide,
 With none but Haroun, who retains
 Such knowledge—and that Nubian feels
 A tyrant's secrets are but chains,
 From which the captive gladly steals,
 And this and more to me reveals :
 Such still to guilt just Alla sends—
 Slaves, tools, accomplices—no friends !

“ All this, Zuleika, harshly sounds ;
 But harsher still my tale must be :
 Howe'er my tongue thy softness wounds,
 Yet I must prove all truth to thee.
 I saw thee start this garb to see,
 Yet is it one I oft have worn,
 And long must wear : this Galiongée,
 To whom thy plighted vow is sworn,
 Is leader of those pirate hordes,
 Whose laws and lives are on their
 swords ;
 To hear whose desolating tale
 Would make thy waning cheek more
 pale :
 Those arms thou see'st my band have
 brought.
 The hands that wield are not remote :
 This cup too for the rugged knaves
 Is fill'd—once quaff'd, they ne'er repine :
 Our prophet might forgive the slaves :
 They're only infidels in wine.

“ What could I be ? Proscribed at home,
 And taunted to a wish to roam ;
 And listless left—for Giaffir's fear
 Denied the courser and the spear—
 Though oft—Oh, Mahomet ! how oft—
 In full Divan the despot scoff'd,
 As if *my* weak unwilling hand
 Refused the bride or the brand :
 He ever went to war alone,
 And pent me here untried—unknown ;
 To Haroun's care with women left.

By hope unblest, of fame bereft,
 While thou—whose softness long en-
 dear'd,
 Though it unmann'd me, still had
 cheer'd—

To Brusa's walls for safety sent,
 Awaited'st there the field's event.
 Haroun, who saw my spirit pining
 Beneath inaction's sluggish yoke,
 His captive, though with dread resign-
 ing,

My thralldom for a season broke,
 On promise to return before
 The day when Giaffir's charge was o'er.
 'T is vain—my tongue cannot impart
 My almost drunkenness of heart,
 When first this liberated eye
 Survey'd Earth, Ocean, Sun, and Sky,
 As if my spirit pierced them through,
 And all their inmost wonders knew !
 One word alone can paint to thee
 That more than feeling—I was Free !
 E'en for thy presence ceased to pine ;
 The World—nay, Heaven itself was
 mine !

“ The shallop of a trusty Moor
 Convey'd me from this idle shore ;
 I long'd to see the isles that gem
 Old Ocean's purple diadem :
 I sought by turns, and saw them all ;
 But when and where I join'd the
 crew,
 With whom I'm pledged to rise or fall,
 When all that we design to do
 Is done, 't will then be time more meet
 To tell thee, when the tale's complete.

“ 'T is true, they are a lawless brood,
 But rough in form, nor mild in mood ;
 And every creed, and every race,
 With them hath found—may find a
 place ;
 But open speech, and ready hand,
 Obedience to their chief's command ;
 A soul for every enterprise,
 That never sees with terror's eyes ;
 Friendship for each, and faith to all,
 And vengeance vow'd for those who fall,
 Have made them fitting instruments
 For more than ev'n my own intents.
 And some—and I have studied all
 Distinguish'd from the vulgar rank,
 But chiefly to my council call
 The wisdom of the cautious Frank—
 And some to higher thoughts aspire,
 The last of Lambro's patriots there
 Anticipated freedom share ;
 And oft around the cavern fire

On visionary schemes debate,
To snatch the Rayahs from their fate.
So let them ease their hearts with prate
Of equal rights, which man ne'er knew;
I have a love for freedom too.

Ay! let me like the ocean-Patriarch roam
Or only know on land the Tartar's home!
My tent on shore, my galley on the sea,
Are more than cities and Serais to me:
Borne by my steed, or wafted by my sail,
Across the desert, or before the gale,
Bound where thou wilt, my barb! or
glide, my prow!

But be the star that guides the wanderer,
Thou!

Thou, my Zuleika, share and bless my
bark;

The Dove of peace and promise to mine
ark!

Or, since that hope denied in worlds of
strife,

Be thou the rainbow to the storms of
life!

The evening beam that smiles the clouds
away,

And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!
Blest—as the Muezzin's strain from Mec-
ca's wall

To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his
call:

Soft—as the melody of youthful days,
That steals the trembling tear of speech-
less praise;

Dear—as his native song to Exile's ears,
Shall sound each tone thy long-loved
voice endears.

For thee in those bright isles is built a
bower

Blooming as Aden in its earliest hour.
A thousand swords, with Selim's heart

and hand,
Wait—wave—defend—destroy—at thy
command!

Girt by my band, Zuleika at my side,
The spoil of nations shall bedeck my
bride.

The Haram's languid years of listless ease
Are well resign'd for cares—for joys like
these:

Not blind to fate, I see, where'er I rove,
Unnumber'd perils—but one only love!
Yet well my toils shall that fond breast
repay,

Though fortune frown, or falser friends
betray.

How dear the dream in darkest hours
of ill,

Should all be changed, to find thee faith-
ful still!

Be but thy soul, like Selim's, firmly
shown;

To thee be Selim's tender as thine own;
To soothe each sorrow: share in each de-
light,

Blend every thought, do all—but dis-
unite!

Once free, 'tis mine our horde again to
guide;

Friends to each other, foes to aught be-
side:

Yet there we follow but the bent assign'd
By fatal Nature to man's warring kind;
Mark! where his carnage and his con-
quests cease!

He makes a solitude, and calls it—peace!
I, like the rest, must use my skill or
strength,

But ask no land beyond my sabre's
length:

Power sways but by division—her re-
source

The blest alternative of fraud or force!
Ours be the last; in time deceit may
come

When cities cage us in a social home:
There ev'n thy soul might err—how oft
the heart

Corruption shakes which peril could not
part!

And woman, more than man, when
death or woe,

Or even Disgrace, would lay her lover
low,

Sunk in the lap of Luxury will shame—
Away suspicion!—*not* Zuleika's name!

But life is hazard at the best; and here
No more remains to win, and much to
fear:

Yes, fear! the doubt, the dread of los-
ing thee,

By Osman's power, and Giaffir's stern
decree.

That dread shall vanish with the favour-
ing gale,

Which Love to-night hath promised to
my sail:

No danger daunts the pair his smile hath
blest,

Their steps still roving, but their hearts
at rest.

With thee all toils are sweet, each clime
hath charms;

Earth—sea alike—our world within our
arms!

Ay—let the loud winds whistle o'er the
deck,

So that those arms cling closer round
my neck:

The deepest murmur of this lip shall be,
No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!
The war of elements no fears impart
To Love, whose deadliest bane is human
Art:

There lie the only rocks our course can
check;

Here moments menace—*there* are years
of wreck!

But hence ye thoughts that rise in Hor-
ror's shape!

This hour bestows, or ever bars, escape.
Few words remain of mine my tale to
close;

Of thine but *one* to waft us from our
foes;

Yea—foes—to me will Giaffir's hate de-
cline?

And is not Osman, who would part us,
thine?

"His head and faith from doubt and
death

Return'd in time my guard to save;
Few heard, none told, that o'er the wave

From isle to isle I roved the while;
And since, though parted from my band,

Too seldom now I leave the land,
No deed they've done, nor deed shall do,

Ere I have heard and doom'd it too:
I form the plan, decree the spoil,

'Tis fit I oftener share the toil.
But now too long I've held thine ear;

Time presses, floats my bark, and here
We leave behind but hate and fear.

To-morrow Osman with his train
Arrives—to-night must break thy chain:

And wouldst thou save that haughty
Bey,—

Perchance *his* life who gave thee
thine,—

With me this hour away—away!
But yet, though thou art plighted

mine,
Wouldst thou recall thy willing vow,

Appall'd by truths imparted now,
Here rest I—not to see thee wed:

But be that peril on *my* head!"

Zuleika, mute and motionless,
Stood like that statue of distress,

When, her last hope for ever gone,
The mother harden'd into stone:

All in the maid that eye could see
Was but a younger Niobé.

But ere her lip, or even her eye,
Essay'd to speak, or look reply,

Beneath the garden's wicket porch
Far flash'd on high a blazing torch!

Another—and another—and another—
"Oh! fly—no more—yet now my more
than brother!"

Far, wide, through every thicket spread
The fearful lights are gleaming red;

Nor these alone—for each right hand
Is ready with a sheathless brand.

They part, pursue, return, and wheel
With searching flambeau, shining steel;

And last of all, his sabre waving,
Stern Giaffir in his fury raving:

And now almost they touch the cave—
Oh! must that grot be Selim's grave?

Dauntless he stood—"Tis come—soon
past—

One kiss, Zuleika—'tis my last:
But yet my band not far from shore

May hear this signal, see the flash;
Yet now too few—the attempt were

rash:
No matter—yet one effort more."

Forth to the cavern mouth he stept;
His pistol's echo rang on high,

Zuleika started not, nor wept,
Despair benumb'd her breast and

eye!—
"They hear me not, or if they ply

Their oars 'tis but to see me die;
That sound hath drawn my foes more

nigh.
Then forth my father's scimitar,

Thou ne'er hast seen less equal war!
Farewell, Zuleika!—sweet! retire:

Yet stay within—here linger safe,
At thee his rage will only chafe.

Stir not—lest even to thee perchance
Some erring blade or ball should glance.

Fear'st thou for him?—may I expire
If in this strife I seek thy sire!

No—though by him that poison pour'd;
No—though again he call me coward!

But tamely shall I meet their steel?
No—as each crest save *his* may feel!"

One bound he made, and gain'd the
sand:

Already at his feet hath sunk
The foremost of the prying band,

A gasping head, a quivering neck:
Another falls—but round him close

A swarming circle of his foes;
From right to left his path he cleft,

And almost met the meeting wave:
His boat appears—not five oars' length—

His comrades strain with desperate
strength—

Oh! are they yet in time to save?
His feet the foremost breakers lave;

His band are plunging in the bay,
 Their sabres glitter through the spray;
 Wet—wild—unwearied to the strand
 They struggle—now they touch the land!
 They come—'tis but to add to slaughter—
 His heart's best blood is on the water.

Escaped from shot, unharm'd by steel,
 Or scarcely grazed its force to feel,
 Had Selim won, betray'd, beset,
 To where the strand and billows met;
 There as his last step left the land—
 And the last death-blow dealt his hand—
 Ah! wherefore did he turn to look

For her his eye but sought in vain?
 That pause, that fatal gaze he took,
 Hath doom'd his death, or fix'd his
 chain.

Sad proof, in peril and in pain,
 How late will Lover's hope remain!
 His back was to the dashing spray:
 Behind, but close, his comrades lay,
 When, at the instant, hiss'd the ball—
 "So may the foes of Giaffir fall!"
 Whose voice is heard? whose carbine
 rang?

Whose bullet through the night-air sang,
 Too nearly, deadly aim'd to err?
 'Tis thine—Abdallah's Murderer!
 The father slowly rued thy hate,
 The son hath found a quicker fate:
 Fast from his breast the blood is bub-
 bling,
 The whiteness of the sea-foam trou-
 bling—

If aught his lips essay'd to groan,
 The rushing billows choked the tone!

Morn slowly rolls the clouds away;
 Few trophies of the fight are there:
 The shouts that shook the midnight-bay
 Are silent; but some signs of fray
 That strand of strife may bear,
 And fragments of each shiver'd brand
 Steps stamp'd; and dash'd into the sand
 The print of many a struggling hand
 May there be mark'd; nor far remote
 A broken torch, an oarless boat;
 And tangled on the weeds that heap
 The beach where shelving to the deep
 There lies a white capote!
 'T is rent in twain—one dark-red stain
 The wave yet ripples o'er in vain;

But where is he who wore?
 Ye! who would o'er his relics weep,
 Go, seek them where the surges sweep
 Their burthen round Sigæum's steep
 And cast on Lemnos' shore:
 The sea-birds shriek above the prey,

O'er which their hungry beaks delay,
 As shaken on their restless pillow,
 His head heaves with the heaving
 billow;

That hand, whose motion is not life,
 Yet feebly seems to menace strife,
 Flung by the tossing tide on high,
 Then levell'd with the wave—
 What reck's it, though that corse shall
 lie

Within a living grave?
 The bird that tears that prostrate form
 Hath only robb'd the meaner worm;
 The only heart, the only eye
 Had bled or wept to see him die,
 Had seen those scatter'd limbs composed,
 And mourn'd above his turban-stone,
 That heart hath burst—that eye was
 closed—

Yea—closed before his own!

By Helle's stream there is a voice of wail!
 And woman's eye is wet—man's cheek
 is pale:

Zuleika! last of Giaffir's race,
 Thy destined lord is come too late:
 He sees not—ne'er shall see thy face!

Can he not hear
 The loud Wul-wulleh warn his distant
 ear?

Thy handmaids weeping at the gate,
 The Koran-chanters of the hymn of fate,
 The silent slaves with folded arms that
 wait,

Sighs in the hall, and shrieks upon the
 gale,

Tell him thy tale!
 Thou didst not view thy Selim fall!
 That fearful moment when he left the
 cave

Thy heart grew chill:
 He was thy hope—thy joy—thy love—
 thine all,
 And that last thought on him thou
 couldst not save
 Sufficed to kill;
 Burst forth in one wild cry—and all was
 still.

Peace to thy broken heart, and virgin
 grave!

Ah! happy! but of life to lose the worst!
 That grief—though deep—though fatal—
 was thy first!

Thrice happy ne'er to feel nor fear the
 force

Of absence, shame, pride, hate, revenge,
 remorse!

And, oh! that pang where more than
 madness lies!

The worm that will not sleep—and never dies ;
 Thought of the gloomy day and ghastly night,
 That dreads the darkness, and yet loathes the light,
 That winds around, and tears the quivering heart !
 Ah ! wherefore not consume it—and depart !
 Woe to thee, rash and unrelenting chief !
 Vainly thou heap'st the dust upon thy head,
 Vainly the sackcloth o'er thy limbs dost spread :
 By that same hand Abdallah—Selim : bled.
 Now let it tear thy beard in idle grief .
 Thy pride of heart, thy bride for Osman's bed,
 She, whom thy sultan had but seen to wed,
 Thy Daughter's dead !
 Hope of thine age, thy twilight's lonely beam,
 The Star hath set that shone on Helle's stream.
 What quench'd its ray ?—the blood that thou hast shed !
 Hark ! to the hurried question of Despair :
 " Where is my child ?"—an Echo answers—" Where ?"
 Within the place of thousand tombs
 That shine beneath, while dark above
 The sad but living cypress glooms
 And withers not, though branch and leaf
 Are stamp'd with an eternal grief,
 Like early unrequited Love,
 One spot exists, which ever blooms,
 Ev'n in that deadly grove—
 A single rose is shedding there
 Its lonely lustre, meek and pale :
 It looks as planted by Despair—
 So white—so faint—the slightest gale
 Might whirl the leaves on high :
 And yet, though storms and blight assail,
 And hands more rude than wintry sky
 May wring it from the stem—in vain—
 To-morrow sees it bloom again :
 The stalk some spirit gently rears,
 And waters with celestial tears,
 For well may maids of Helle deem
 That this can be no earthly flower,
 Which mocks the tempest's withering hour,
 And buds unshelter'd by a bower ;

Nor droops though Spring refuse her shower,
 Nor woos the summer beam :
 To it the livelong night there sings
 A bird unseen—but not remote :
 Invisible his airy wings,
 But soft as harp that Houri strings
 His long entrancing note !
 It were the Bulbul ; but his throat,
 Though mournful, pours not such a strain :
 For they who listen cannot leave
 The spot, but linger there and grieve,
 As if they loved in vain !
 And yet so sweet the tears they shed,
 'Tis sorrow so unmix'd with dread,
 They scarce can bear the morn to break
 That melancholy spell,
 And longer yet would weep and wake,
 He sings so wild and well !
 But when the day-blush bursts from high
 Expires that magic melody.
 And some have been who could believe,
 (So fondly youthful dreams deceive,
 Yet harsh be they that blame.)
 That note so piercing and profound
 Will shape and syllable its sound
 Into Zuleika's name.
 'Tis from her cypress summit heard,
 That melts in air the liquid word :
 'T is from her lowly virgin earth
 That white rose takes its tender birth.
 There late was laid a marble stone ;
 Eve saw it placed—the Morrow gone !
 It was no mortal arm that bore
 That deep-fix'd pillar to the shore ;
 For there, as Helle's legends tell,
 Next morn 'twas found where Selim fell ;
 Lash'd by the tumbling tide, whose wave
 Denied his bones a holier grave ;
 And there by night, reclined, 't is said,
 Is seen a ghastly turban'd head :
 And hence extended by the billow,
 ' Tis named the " Pirate-phantom's pillow !"
 Where first it lay that mourning flower
 Hath flourish'd ; flourisheth this hour,
 Alone and dewy, coldly pure and pale ;
 As weeping Beauty's cheek at Sorrow's tale !
November, 1813. November 29, 1813.

ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE
 " Expende Annibalem :—quot libras in ducem
 summo
 Invenies ?"—Juvenal, *Sat. x.*
 'T is done—but yesterday a King !
 And arm'd with Kings to strive—

And now thou art a nameless thing :
 So abject—yet alive !
 Is this the man of thousand thrones,
 Who strew'd our earth with hostile
 bones,

And can he thus survive?
 Since he, miscalled the Morning Star,
 Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

Ill-minded man ! why scourge thy kind
 Who bow'd so low the knee ?
 By gazing on thyself grown blind,
 Thou taught'st the rest to see.
 With might unquestion'd,—power to
 save,—
 Thine only gift hath been the grave,
 To those that worshipp'd thee ;
 Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
 Ambition's less than littleness !

Thanks for that lesson—It will teach
 To after-warriors more,
 Than high Philosophy can preach,
 And vainly preach'd before.
 That spell upon the minds of men
 Breaks never to unite again,
 That led them to adore
 Those Pagod things of sabre sway
 With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

The triumph and the vanity,
 The rapture of the strife—
 The earthquake voice of Victory,
 To thee the breath of life ;
 The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
 Which man seem'd made but to obey,
 Wherewith renown was rife—
 All quell'd !—Dark Spirit ! what must be
 The madness of thy memory !

The Desolator desolate !
 The Victor overthrown !
 The Arbiter of others' fate
 A Suppliant for his own !
 Is it some yet imperial hope
 That with such change can calmly cope ?
 Or dread of death alone ?
 To die a prince—or live a slave—
 Thy choice is most ignobly brave !

He who of old would rend the oak,
 Dream'd not of the rebound :
 Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke—
 Alone—how look'd he round ?
 Thou, in the sternness of thy strength,
 An equal deed hast done at length,
 And darker fate hast found :
 He fell, the forest prowlers' prey ;
 But thou must eat thy heart away !

The Roman, when his burning heart
 Was slaked with blood of Rome,
 Threw down the dagger—dared depart,
 In savage grandeur, home—
 He dared depart in utter scorn
 Of men that such a yoke had borne,
 Yet left him such a doom !
 His only glory was that hour
 Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

The Spaniard,¹ when the lust of sway
 Had lost its quickening spell,
 Cast crowns for rosaries away,
 An empire for a cell ;
 A strict accountant of his beads,
 A subtle disputant on creeds,
 His dotage trifled well :
 Yet better had he neither known
 A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

But thou—from thy reluctant hand
 The thunderbolt is wrung—
 Too late thou leav'st the high command
 To which thy weakness clung ;
 All Evil Spirit as thou art,
 It is enough to grieve the heart
 To see thine own unstrung ;
 To think that God's fair world hath been
 The footstool of a thing so mean ;

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
 Who thus can hoard his own !
 And Monarchs bow'd the trembling
 limb,
 And thank'd him for a throne !
 Fair Freedom ! we may hold thee dear,
 When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
 In humblest guise have shown.
 Oh ! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
 A brighter name to lure mankind !

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore
 Nor written thus in vain—
 Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
 Or deepen every stain :
 If thou hadst died as honor dies.
 Some new Napoleon might arise,
 To shame the world again—
 But who would soar the solar height,
 To set in such a starless night ?

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust
 Is vile as vulgar clay ;
 Thy scales, Mortality ! are just
 To all that pass away :
 But yet methought the living great
 Some higher sparks should animate,
 To dazzle and dismay :

¹ The Emperor Charles V

Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make
mirth
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

And she, proud Austria's mournful
flower,
Thy still imperial bride;
How bears her breast the torturing
hour?

Still clings she to thy side?
Must she too bend, must she too share
Thy late repentance, long despair,
Thou throneless Homicide?
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,—
'T is worth thy vanish'd diadem!

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
And gaze upon the sea;
That element may meet thy smile—
It ne'er was ruled by thee!
Or trace with thine all idle hand
In loitering mood upon the sand
That Earth is now as free!
That Corinth's pedagogue¹ hath now
Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage
What thoughts will there be thine,
While brooding in thy prison'd rage?
But one—"The world *was* mine!"
Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit pour'd so widely forth—
So long obey'd—so little worth!

Or, like the thief of fire from heaven,
Wilt thou withstand the shock?
And share with him, the unforgiven,
His vulture and his rock!
Foredoom'd by God—by man accurst,
And that last act, though not thy worst,
The very Fiend's arch mock;
He in his fall preserved his pride
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

There was a day—there was an hour,
While earth was Gaul's—Gaul thine—
When that immeasurable power
Unsated to resign
Had been an act of purer fame
Than gathers round Marengo's name,
And gilded thy decline,
Through the long twilight of all time,
Despite some passing clouds of crime.

¹ Dionysius the younger, tyrant of Syracuse, who after his second banishment earned his living by teaching, in Corinth.

But thou forsooth must be a king,
And don the purple vest,
As if that foolish robe could wring
Remembrance from thy breast.
Where is that faded garment? where
The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,
The star, the string, the crest?
Vain froward child of empire! say,
Are all thy playthings snatched away?

Where may the wearied eye repose
When gazing on the Great;
Where neither guilty glory glows,
Nor despicable state?
Yes—one—the first—the last—the best—
The Cincinnatus of the West,
Whom envy dared not hate,
Bequeath'd the name of Washington,
To make man blush there was but one!
April 9-10, 1814. April 16, 1814.

✎ SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-
place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that
glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!
June 12, 1814. 1815.

OH! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM

OH! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender
gloom:

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,

And feed deep thought with many a dream,
 And lingering pause and lightly tread;
 Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead!

Away! we know that tears are vain,
 That death nor heeds nor hears distress;
 Will this unteach us to complain?
 Or make one mourner weep the less?
 And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
 Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.
1814 or 1815. April 23, 1815.

W. THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf
 on the fold,
 And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
 And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
 When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
 That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
 Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
 That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
 And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
 And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
 And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
 But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride;
 And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
 And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
 With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:

And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
 The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
 And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
 And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
 Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

February 17, 1815. 1815.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE

WARRIORS and chiefs! should the shaft or the sword
 Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
 Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path:
 Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath!

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
 Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
 Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet!
 Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
 Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!
 Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
 Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day!
1815. 1815.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

"O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
 Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater
 Felix! in imo qui scatentem
 Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."
GRAY'S Poemata.

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like
 that it takes away,
 When the glow of early thought declines
 in feeling's dull decay;
 'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the
 blush alone, which fades so fast,
 But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere
 youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the
 wreck of happiness

Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or
ocean of excess :
The magnet of their course is gone, or
only points in vain
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall
never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like
death itself comes down ;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not
dream its own ;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the foun-
tain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 't is
where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips,
and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no
more their former hope of rest ;
'T is but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd
turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but
worn and gray beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what
I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er
many a vanish'd scene ;
As springs in deserts found seem sweet,
all brackish though they be,
So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those
tears would flow to me.

Murch, 1815. 1816.

FARE THEE WELL

"Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;
But whispering tongues can poison truth
And constancy lives in realms above ;
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain ;

But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been."

COLERIDGE'S Christabel.

FARE thee well ! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare thee well :
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again :

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show !
Then thou wouldst at last discover
'T was not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend
thee—

Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe :

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found,
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound ?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not ;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away :

Still thine own life retaineth,
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat ;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead ;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou wouldst solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father !"
Though his care she must forego ?

When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is press'd,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless
thee,
Think of him thy love had bless'd !

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know ;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken ;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now :

But 't is done—all words are idle—
Words from me are rainer still ;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well! thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted,
More than this I scarce can die.

March 18, 1816. April 4, 1816.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming;

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.
March 28, 1816. 1816.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

W. CANTO THE THIRD

"Afin que cette application vous forçât de penser à autre chose; il n'y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps." *Lettre du Roi de Prusse à D'Alembert, Sept. 7, 1776.*

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child!

ADA! sole daughter of my house and heart?

When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,

And then we parted,—not as now we part,

But with a hope.—

Awaking with a start,
The waters heave around me; and on high

The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
Whither I know not; but the hour's gone by,

When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye.

Once more upon the waters! yet once more!

And the waves bound beneath me as a steed

That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar!

Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!

Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,

And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,

Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to sail

Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;

Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind

Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I find

The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,

Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,

O'er which all heavily the journeying years

Plod the last sands of life,—where not a flower appears.

Since my young days of passion—joy, or pain,

Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,

And both may jar: it may be, that in vain I would essay as I have sung to sing.

Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;

So that it wean me from the weary dream Of selfish grief or gladness—so it fling

Forgetfulness around me—it shall seem To me, though to none else, a not un-

grateful theme.

He, who grown aged in this world of woe,

In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,

So that no wonder waits him; nor below Can love or sorrow, fame, ambition,

strife,
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife

Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves,

yet rife
With airy images, and shapes which dwell

Still unimpair'd, though old, in the soul's haunted cell.

'T is to create, and in creating live
A being more intense that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now.
What am I? Nothing: but not so art
thou,

Soul of my thought! with whom I tra-
verse earth,
Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mix'd with thy spirit, blended with thy
birth,
And feeling still with thee in my crush'd
feelings' dearth.

Yet must I think less wildly;—I *have*
thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain be-
came,

In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:
And thus, untaught in youth my heart
to tame,
My springs of life were poison'd. 'T is
too late!

Yet am I changed; though still enough
the same

In strength to bear what time cannot
abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without ac-
cusing Fate.

Something too much of this :—but now
't is past,

And the spell closes with its silent seal.
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last;
He of the breast which fain no more
would feel,

Wrung with the wounds which kill not
but ne'er heal;

Yet Time, who changes all, had alter'd
him

In soul and aspect as in age: years steal
Fire from the mind as vigor from the
limb;

And life's enchanted cup but sparkles
near the brim.

His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he
found

The dregs were wormwood,—but he
fill'd again,

And from a purer fount, on holier ground
And deem'd its spring perpetual; but in
vain!

Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which gall'd for ever, fettering though
unseen,

And heavy though it clank'd not; worn
with pain,

Which pined although it spoke not, and
grew keen,
Entering with every step he took through
many a scene.

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mix'd
Again in fancied safety with his kind,
And deem'd his spirit now so firmly fix'd
And sheath'd with an invulnerable mind,
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurk'd behind;
And he, as one, might 'midst the many
stand

Unheeded, searching through the crowd
to find

Fit speculation; such as in strange land
He found in wonder-works of God and
Nature's hand.

But who can view the ripen'd rose, nor
seek

To wear it? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's
cheek,

Nor feel the heart can never all grow
old?

Who can contemplate Fame through
clouds unfold

The star which rises o'er her steep, nor
climb?

Harold, once more within the vortex;
roll'd

On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's
fond prime.

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with Man; with whom he
held

Little in common; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul
was quell'd

In youth by his own thoughts; still un-
compell'd,

He would not yield dominion of his
mind

To spirits against whom his own rebell'd;
Proud though in desolation; which
could find

A life within itself, to breathe without
mankind.

Where rose the mountains, there to him
were friends;

Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his
home;

Where a blue sky, and glowing clime,
extends,

He had the passion and the power to
roam;

The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they
spake

A mutual language, clearer than the
tome

Of his land's tongue, which he would oft
forsake

For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams
on the lake.

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the
stars,

Till he had peopled them with beings
bright

As their own beams; and earth, and
earthborn jars,

And human frailties, were forgotten
quite:

Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
He had been happy; but this clay will
sink

Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the
link

That keeps us from yon heaven which
woos us to its brink.

But in Man's dwellings he became a
thing

Restless and worn, and stern and weari-
some,

Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipt
wing,

To whom the boundless air alone were
home:

Then came his fit again, which to o'er-
come,

As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat
His breast and beak against his wiry
dome

Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the
heat

Of his impeded soul would through his
bosom eat.

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With nought of hope left, but with less
of gloom;

The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,
Which, though 't were wild,—as on the
plunder'd wreck

When mariners would madly meet their
doom

With draughts intemperate on the sink-
ing deck,—

Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore
to check.

Stop!—for thy tread is on an Empire's
dust!

An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred
below!

Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?

None; but the moral's truth tells simpler
so,

As the ground was before, thus let it
be;—

How that red rain hath made the harvest
grow!

And is this all the world has gain'd by
thee,

Thou first and last of fields! king-making
Victory?

And Harold stands upon this place of
skulls,

The grave of France, the deadly Water-
loo!

How in an hour the power which gave
annuls

Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting
too;

In "pride of place" here last the eagle
flew,

Then tore with bloody talon the rent
plain,

Pierced by the shaft of banded nations
through;

Ambition's life and labors all were vain;
He wears the shatter'd links of the
world's broken chain.

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the
bit

And foam in fetters;—but is Earth more
free?

Did nations combat to make *One* sub-
mit;

Or league to teach all kings true sov-
ereignty?

What! shall reviving Thralldom again
be

The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down,

shall we
Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly
gaze

And servile knees to thrones? No;
prove before ye praise!

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no
more!

In vain fair cheeks were furrow'd with
hot tears

For Europe's flowers long rooted up
before

The trampler of her vineyards; in vain
 years
 Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
 Have all been borne, and broken by the
 accord
 Of roused-up millions; all that most
 endears
 Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a
 sword
 Such as Harmodius drew on Athens'
 tyrant lord.

There was a sound of revelry by night
 And Belgium's capital had gather'd
 then
 Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and
 brave men;
 A thousand hearts beat happily; and
 when
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
 Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which
 spake again,
 And all went merry as a marriage bell;
 But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes
 like a rising knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the
 wind,
 Or the car rattling o'er the stony
 street;
 On with the dance! let joy be uncon-
 fined;
 No sleep till morn, when Youth and
 Pleasure meet
 To chase the glowing Hours with flying
 feet—
 But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in
 once more,
 As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
 And nearer, clearer, deadlier than be-
 fore!
 Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's
 opening roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high
 hall
 Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he
 did hear
 That sound the first amidst the fes-
 tival,
 And caught its tone with Death's pro-
 phetic ear;
 And when they smiled because he
 deem'd it near,
 His heart more truly knew that peal
 too well
 Which stretch'd his father on a bloody
 bier.

And roused the vengeance blood alone
 could quell;
 He rush'd into the field, and, foremost
 fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to
 and fro,
 And gathering tears, and tremblings
 of distress,
 And cheeks all pale, which but an
 hour ago
 Blush'd at the praise of their own love-
 liness;
 And there were sudden partings, such
 as press
 The life from out young hearts, and
 choking sighs
 Which ne'er might be repeated; who
 could guess
 If ever more should meet those mutual
 eyes,
 Since upon night so sweet such awful
 morn could rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste:
 the steed,
 The mustering squadron, and the clat-
 tering car,
 Went pouring forward with impetuous
 speed,
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of
 war;
 And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
 And near, the beat of the alarming
 drum
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning
 star;
 While thron'd the citizens with ter-
 ror dumb,
 Or whispering, with white lips—"The
 foe, they come! they come!"

And wild and high the "Cameron's
 gathering" rose!
 The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's
 hills
 Have heard, and heard, too, have her
 Saxon foes:—
 How in the noon of night that pibroch
 thrills,
 Savage and shrill! But with the breath
 which fills
 Their mountain-pipe, so fill the moun-
 taineers
 With the fierce native daring which
 instils
 The stirring memory of a thousand
 years,
 And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each
 clansman's ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her
green leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they
pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above
shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valor, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope shall
moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound
of strife.
The morn the marshalling in arms,—
the day
Battle's magnificently stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which
when rent
The earth is cover'd thick with other
clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd
and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one
red burial blent!

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps
than mine:
Yet one I would select from that proud
throng,
Partly because they blend me with his
line,
And partly that I did his sire some wrong,
And partly that bright names will hallow
song;
And his was of the bravest, and when
shower'd
The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd
files along,
Even where the thickest of war's tem-
pest lower'd,
They reach'd no nobler breast than thine,
young gallant Howard!

There have been tears and breaking
hearts for thee,
And mine were nothing had I such to
give;
But when I stood beneath the fresh
green tree,
Which living waves where thou didst
cease to live,
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the
Spring

Came forth her work of gladness to
contrive,
With all her reckless birds upon the
wing,
I turn'd from all she brought to those
she could not bring.

I turn'd to thee, to thousands, of whom
each
And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to
teach
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's,
must awake
Those whom they thirst for; though the
sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot
slake
The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honor'd but assumes a stronger,
bitterer claim.

They mourn, but smile at length; and,
smiling, mourn:
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and
sail be torn;
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on
the hall
In massy hoariness; the ruin'd wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements
are gone;
The bars survive the captive they en-
thral;
The day drags through, though storms
keep out the sun:
And thus the heart will break, yet bro-
kenly live on:

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more
it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not
forsakes,
Living in shatter'd guise; and still, and
cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow
aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things
are untold.

There is a very life in our despair,
Vitality of poison,—a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches; for
it were

As nothing did we die ; but Life will suit
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's
shore,

All ashes to the taste : Did man compute
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er
Such hours 'gainst years of life,—say,
would he name threescore ?

The Psalmist number'd out the years of
man :

They are enough ; and if thy tale be
true,

Thou, who didst grudge him even that
fleeting span,

More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo !
Millions of tongues record thee, and
anew

Their children's lips shall echo them,
and say—

“ Here, where the sword united nations
drew,

Our countrymen were warring on that
day ! ”

And this is much, and all which will not
pass away.

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst
of men,

Whose spirit, antithetically mixt,
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixt ;
Extreme in all things ! hadst thou been
betwixt,

Thy throne had still been thine, or never
been ;

For daring made thy rise as fall : thou
seek'st

Even now to re-assume the imperial
mien,

And shake again the world, the Thun-
derer of the scene !

Conqueror and captive of the earth art
thou !

She trembles at thee still, and thy wild
name

Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds
than now

That thou art nothing, save the jest of
Fame,

Who woo'd thee once, thy vassal, and
became

The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou
wert

A god unto thyself ; nor less the same
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,

Who deem'd thee for a time whate'er
thou didst assert.

Oh, more or less than man—in high or
low,

Battling with nations, flying from the
field ;

Now making monarchs' necks thy foot-
stool, now

More than thy meanest soldier taught
to yield ;

An empire thou couldst crush, command,
rebuild,

But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skill'd,

Look through thine own, nor curb the
lust of war,

Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave
the loftiest star.

Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turn-
ing tide

With that untainted innate philosophy,
Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep
pride,

Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood
hard by,

To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou
hast smiled

With a sedate and all-enduring eye ;—
When Fortune fled her spoil'd and
favorite child,

He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon
him piled.

Sager than in thy fortunes ; for in them
Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show

That just habitual scorn, which could
contemn

Men and their thoughts ; 'twas wise to
feel, not so

To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to
use

Till they were turn'd unto thine over-
throw :

'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose ;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such
lot who choose.

If, like a tower upon a headland rock,
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall
alone,

Such scorn of man had help'd to brave
the shock ;

But men's thoughts were the steps which
paved thy throne,

Their admiration thy best weapon shone ;
The part of Philip's son was thine, not
then

(Unless aside thy purple had been
thrown)

Like stern Diogenes to mock at men ;
For sceptred cynics earth were far too
wide a den.

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane ; there is a
fire
And motion of the soul which will not
dwell

In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire ;
And, but once kindled, quenchless ever-
more,

Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest ; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever
bore.

This makes the madmen who have made
men mad

By their contagion ; Conquerors and
Kings,

Founders of sects and systems, to whom
add

Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet
things

Which stir too strongly the soul's secret
springs,

And are themselves the fools to those
they fool ;

Envid, yet how unenviable ! what stings
Are theirs ! One breast laid open were a
school

Which would unteach mankind the lust
to shine or rule :

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at
last,

And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,
That should their days, surviving perils
past,

Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die ;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to
waste

With its own flickering, or a sword laid
by,

Which eats into itself, and rusts inglori-
ously.

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall
find

The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds
and snow ;

He who surpasses or subdues mankind
Must look down on the hate of those
below.

Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,

And far *beneath* the earth and ocean
spread,

Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those
summits led.

Away with these ! true Wisdom's world
will be

Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature ! for who teems like
thee,

Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine !
There Harold gazes on a work divine,
A blending of all beauties ; streams and
dells,

Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield,
mountain, vine,

And chiefless castles breathing stern
farewells

From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin
greenly dwells.

And there they stand, as stands a lofty
mind,

Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the crannying
wind,

Or holding dark communion with the
cloud.

There was a day when they were young
and proud ;

Banners on high, and battles pass'd
below ;

But they who fought are in a bloody
shroud,

And those which waved are shredless
dust ere now,

And the bleak battlements shall bear no
future blow.

Beneath those battlements, within those
walls,

Power dwelt amidst her passions ; in
proud state

Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,
Doing his evil will, nor less elate
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.

What want these outlaws conquerors
should have

But history's purchased page to call them
great ?

A wider space, an ornamented grave ?
Their hopes were not less warm, their
souls were full as brave.

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died !

And Love, which lent a blazon to their
shields,

With emblems well devised by amorous
pride,
Through all the mail of iron hearts
would glide;
But still their flame was fierceness, and
drew on
Keen contest and destruction near allied,
And many a tower for some fair mis-
chief won,
Saw the discolor'd Rhine beneath its
ruin run.

But Thou, exulting and abounding
river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they
flow
Through banks whose beauty would
endure for ever
Could man but leave thy bright crea-
tion so,
Nor its fair promise from the surface
mow
With the sharp scythe of conflict,—
then to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to
know
Earth paved like Heaven; and to seem
such to me,
Even now what wants thy stream?—
that it should Lethe be.

A thousand battles have assail'd thy
banks,
But these and half their fame have
pass'd away,
And Slaughter heap'd on high his welter-
ing ranks;
Their very graves are gone, and what
are they?
Thy tide wash'd down the blood of
yesterday,
And all was stainless, and on thy clear
stream
Glass'd, with its dancing light, the
sunny ray;
But o'er the blacken'd memory's blight-
ing dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweep-
ing as they seem.

Thus Harold inly said, and pass'd along,
Yet not insensible to all which here
Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made even
exile dear:
Though on his brow were graven lines
austere,
And tranquil sternness, which had ta'en
the place

Of feelings fierier far but less severe,
Joy was not always absent from his face,
But o'er it in such scenes would steal
with transient trace.

Nor was all love shut from him, though
his days
Of passion had consumed themselves to
dust.
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
On such as smile upon us; the heart
must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though
disgust
Hath wean'd it from all worldlings: thus
he felt,
For there was soft remembrance, and
sweet trust
In one fond breast, to which his own
would melt,
And in its tenderer hour on that his
bosom dwelt.

And he had learn'd to love,—I know not
why,
For this in such as him seems strange of
mood,—
The helpless looks of blooming infancy,
Even in its earliest nurture; what sub-
dued,
To change like this, a mind so far im-
bued
With scorn of man, it little boots to
know;
But thus it was; and though in solitude
Small power the nipp'd affections have
to grow,
In him this glow'd when all beside had
ceased to glow.

And there was one soft breast, as hath
been said,
Which unto his was bound by stronger
ties
Than the church links withal; and,
though unwed,
That love was pure, and, far above dis-
guise,
Had stood the test of mortal enmities
Still undivided, and cemented more
By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;
But this was firm, and from a foreign
shore
Well to that heart might his these ab-
sent greetings pour!

The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding
Rhine.

Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the
vine,
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,
And fields which promise corn and
wine,
And scatter'd cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them
shine,
Have strew'd a scene, which I should
see
With double joy wert *thou* with me.

And peasant girls, with deep blue
eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise ;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls
of gray ;
And many a rock which steeply
lowers,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers ;
But one thing want these banks of
Rhine,—
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine !

I send the lilies given to me ;
Though long before thy hand they
touch,
I know that they must wither'd be,
But yet reject them not as such ;
For I have cherish'd them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping
nigh,
And know'st them gather'd by the
Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine !

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round :
The haughtiest breast its wish might
bound
Through life to dwell delighted here ;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of
Rhine !

By Coblenz, on a rise of gentle ground,
There is a small and simple pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant
mound :

Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,
Our enemy's—but let not that forbid
Honor to Marceau ! o'er whose early
tomb
Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough
soldier's lid,
Lamenting and yet envying such a
doom,
Falling for France, whose rights he
battled to resume.

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young
career,—
His mourners were two hosts, his friends
and foes ;
And fitly may the stranger lingering
here
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose ;
For he was Freedom's champion, one of
those,
The few in number, who had not
o'erstept
The charter to chastise which she be-
stows
On such as wield her weapons ; he had
kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men
o'er him wept.

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shatter'd
wall
Black with the miner's blast, upon her
height
Yet shows of what she was, when shell
and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did
light :
A tower of victory ! from whence the
flight
Of baffled foes was watch'd along the
plain :
But Peace destroy'd what War could
never blight,
And laid those proud roofs bare to Sum-
mer's rain—
On which the iron shower for years had
pour'd in vain.

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine ! How long
delighted
The stranger fain would linger on his
way !
Thine is a scene alike where souls united
Or lonely Contemplation thus might
stray ;
And could the ceaseless vultures cease
to prey
On self-condemning bosoms, it were
here,

Where Nature, nor too sombre nor too
gay,
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to
the year.

Adieu to thee again ! a vain adieu !
There can be no farewell to scene like
thine ;

The mind is color'd by thy every hue ;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign
Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely
Rhine !

'T is with the thankful heart of parting
praise ;

More mighty spots may rise, more glar-
ing shine,

But none unite in one attaching maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft,—the glories
of old days,

The negligently grand, the fruitful
bloom

Of coming ripeness, the white city's
sheen,

The rolling stream, the precipice's
gloom,

The forest's growth, and Gothic walls
between,

The wild rocks shaped as they had
turrets been,

In mockery of man's art ; and these
withal

A race of faces happy as the scene,
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
Still springing o'er thy banks, though
Empires near them fall.

But these recede. Above me are the
Alps,

The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy
scalps,

And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of
snow !

All that expands the spirit, yet appalls,
Gather around these summits, as to
show

How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet
leave vain man below.

But ere these matchless heights I dare
to scan,

There is a spot should not be pass'd in
vain,—

Morat ! the proud, the patriot field !
where man

May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
Nor blush for those who conquer'd on
that plain ;

Here Burgundy bequeath'd his tomb-
less host,

A bony heap, through ages to remain,
Themselves their monument ;— the
Stygian coast

Unsepulchred they roam'd, and shriek'd
each wandering ghost.

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage
vies,

Morat and Marathon twin names shall
stand ;

They were true Glory's stainless vic-
tories,

Won by the unambitious heart and
hand

Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
All unbought champions in no princely
cause

Of vice-entail'd Corruption ; they no
land

Doom'd to bewail the blasphemy of
laws

Making kings' rights divine, by some
Draconic clause.

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old
days ;

'T is the last remnant of the wreck of
years,

And looks as with the wild-bewilder'd
gaze

Of one to stone converted by amaze,
Yet still with consciousness ; and there
it stands

Making a marvel that it not decays,
When the coeval pride of human hands,
Levell'd Adventicum,¹ hath strew'd her
subject lands.

And there—oh ! sweet and sacred be
the name !—

Julia—the daughter, the devoted—gave
Her youth to Heaven ; her heart, be-
neath a claim

Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's
grave.

Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers
would crave

The life she lived in ; but the judge was
just,

And then she died on him she could
not save.

¹ The Roman capital of Helvetia ; now Aven-
ches.

Their tomb was simple, and without
a bust,
And held within their urn one mind,
one heart, one dust.

But these are deeds which should not
pass away,
And names that must not wither,
though the earth

Forgets her empires with a just decay,
The enslavers and the enslaved, their
death and birth ;

The high, the mountain-majesty of worth
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe,
And from its immortality look forth
In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine
snow,

Imperishably pure beyond all things
below.

Lake Leman woos me with its crystal
face,

The mirror where the stars and moun-
tains view

The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far
height and hue ;

There is too much of man here, to look
through

With a fit mind the might which I
behold ;

But soon in me shall Loneliness renew
Thoughts hid, but not less cherish'd
than of old,

Ere mingling with the herd had penn'd
me in their fold.

To fly from, need not be to hate, man-
kind :

All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In the hot throng, where we become
the spoil

Of our infection, till too late and long
We may deplore and struggle with the
coil,

In wretched interchange of wrong for
wrong

Midst a contentious world, striving
where none are strong.

There, in a moment we may plunge our
years

In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own soul turn all our blood to
tears,

And color things to come with hues
of Night ;

The race of life becomes a hopeless
flight

To those who walk in darkness : on the
sea

The boldest steer but where their ports
invite ;

But there are wanderers o'er Eternity
Whose bark drives on and on, and
anchor'd ne'er shall be.

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake ?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth
make

A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake ;—
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doom'd
to inflict or bear ?

I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me ; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the
hum

Of human cities torture : I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Class'd among creatures, when the soul
can flee,

And with the sky, the peak, the heaving
plain

Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not
in vain.

And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life :
I look upon the peopled desert past,
As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was
cast,

To act and suffer, but remount at last
With a fresh pinion ; which I feel to
spring,

Though young, yet waxing vigorous as
the blast

Which it would cope with, on de-
lighted wing,

Spurning the clay-cold bonds which
round our being cling.

And when, at length, the mind shall be
all free

From what it hates in this degraded
form,

Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
Existent happier in the fly and worm—
When elements to elements conform,
And dust is as it should be, shall I not

Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?

The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each spot?

Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part

Of me and of my soul, as I of them?

Is not the love of these deep in my heart With a pure passion? should I not condemn

All objects, if compared with these? and stem

A tide of suffering, rather than forego Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm

Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below,

Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not glow?

But this is not my theme; and I return To that which is immediate, and require Those who find contemplation in the urn, To look on One, whose dust was once all fire,

A native of the land where I respire The clear air for a while—a passing guest Where he became a being,—whose desire Was to be glorious; 't was a foolish quest,

The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,

The apostle of affliction, he who threw Enchantment over passion, and from woe Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew

The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew

How to make madness beautiful and cast O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue

Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past

The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

His love was passion's essence:—as a tree On fire by lightning, with ethereal flame Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be Thus, and enamor'd, were in him the same.

But his was not the love of living dame, Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,

But of ideal beauty, which became In him existence, and o'erflowing teems Along his burning page, distemper'd though it seems.

This breathed itself to life in Julie, *this* Invested her with all that's wild and sweet;

This hallow'd, too, the memorable kiss Which every morn his fever'd lip would greet,

From hers, who but with friendship his would meet;

But to that gentle touch through brain and breast

Flash'd the thrill'd spirit's love-devouring heat;

In that absorbing sigh perchance more blest

Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possess.

His life was one long war with self-sought foes,

Or friends by him self-banish'd; for his mind

Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and chose,

For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind, 'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind.

But he was phrensied,—wherefore, who may know?

Since cause might be which skill could never find;

But he was phrensied by disease or woe, To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show.

For then he was inspired, and from him came,

As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,

Those oracles which set the world in flame,

Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more:

Did he not this for France? which lay before

Bow'd to the inborn tyranny of years?

Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,

Till by the voice of him and his compeers Roused up to too much wrath, which follows o'ergrown fears?

They made themselves a fearful monument!

The wreck of old opinions—things which grew,

Breathed from the birth of time: the
veil they rent,
And what behind it lay, all earth shall
view.

But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild
Upon the same foundation, and renew
Dungeons and thrones, which the same
hour refill'd,
As heretofore, because ambition was self-
will'd.

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
Mankind have felt their strength, and
made it felt.

They might have used it better, but,
allured

By their new vigor, sternly have they
dealt

On one another; pity ceased to melt
With her once natural charities. But
they,

Who in oppression's darkness caved had
dwelt,

They were not eagles, nourish'd with
the day;

What marvel then, at times, if they
mistook their prey?

What deep wounds ever closed with-
out a scar?

The heart's bleed longest, and but heal
to wear

That which disfigures it; and they who
war

With their own hopes, and have been
vanquish'd, bear

Silence, but not submission: in his
lair

Fix'd Passion holds his breath, until
the hour

Which shall atone for years; none need
despair:

It came, it cometh, and will come,—
the power

To punish or forgive—in *one* we shall be
slower.

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted
lake,

With the wild world I dwelt in, is a
thing

Which warns me, with its stillness, to
forsake

Earth's troubled waters for a purer
spring.

This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I
loved

Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft mur-
muring
Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice re-
proved,
That I with stern delights should e'er
have been so moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk,
yet clear,

Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly
seen,

Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights
appear

Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from
the shore,

Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on
the ear

Drops the light drip of the suspended
oar,

Or chirps the grasshopper one good-
night carol more;

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the
brakes

Starts into voice a moment, then is
still.

There seems a floating whisper on the
hill,

But that is fancy, for the starlight dew
All silently their tears of love instil,

Weeping themselves away, till they
infuse

Deep into nature's breast the spirit of
her hues.

Ye stars! which are the poetry of
heaven!

If in your bright leaves we would read
the fate

Of men and empires,—'tis to be for-
given,

That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,

And claim a kindred with you; for ye
are

A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from
afar,

That fortune, fame, power, life, have
named themselves a star.

All heaven and earth are still—though
not in sleep,

But breathless, as we grow when feeling
most:

And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:—

All heaven and earth are still: From the high host

Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain coast,

All is concentr'd in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt,

And purifies from self: it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known

Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things with beauty:—
't would disarm

The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places, and the peak
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take

A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honor shrines are weak,

Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and compare

Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,

With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,

Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer!

The sky is changed!—and such a change!
Oh night,

And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,

Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light

Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among

Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,

But every mountain now hath found a tongue,

And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,

Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!

Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be

A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!

How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,

And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!

And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee

Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,

As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between

Heights which appear as lovers who have parted

In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,

That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;

Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,

Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:

Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage:

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,

The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:

For here, not one, but many, make their play,

And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,

Flashing and cast around; of all the band,

The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd

His lightnings,—as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,

There the hot shaft should blast what ever therein lurk'd.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!

With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul

To make these felt and feeling, well may be

Things that have made me watchful; the far roll

Of your departing voices, is the knoll
 Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.
 But where of ye, O tempests! is the
 goal?
 Are ye like those within the human
 breast?
 Or do ye find, at length, like eagles,
 some high nest?

Could I embody and unbosom now
 That which is most within me,—could
 I wreak
 My thoughts upon expression, and thus
 throw
 Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings,
 strong or weak,
 All that I would have sought, and all I
 seek,
 Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—
 into *one* word,
 And that one word were Lightning, I
 would speak;
 But as it is, I live and die unheard,
 With a most voiceless thought, sheath-
 ing it as a sword.

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
 With breath all incense, and with
 cheek all bloom,
 Laughing the clouds away with playful
 scorn,
 And living as if earth contain'd no
 tomb,—
 And glowing into day: we may resume
 The march of our existence: and thus I,
 Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may
 find room
 And food for meditation, nor pass by
 Much, that may give us pause, if pon-
 der'd fittingly.

Clarens! sweet Clarens, birthplace of
 deep Love!
 Thine air is the young breath of pas-
 sionate thought;
 Thy trees take root in Love; the snows
 above
 The very Glaciers have his colors
 caught,
 And sunset into rose-hues sees them
 wrought
 By rays which sleep there lovingly; the
 rocks,
 The permanent crags, tell here of Love,
 who sought
 In them a refuge from the worldly
 shocks,
 Which stir and sting the soul with hope
 that woos, then mocks.

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are
 trod,—
 Undying Love's, who here ascends a
 throne
 To which the steps are mountains;
 where the god
 Is a pervading life and light,—so shown
 Not on those summits solely, nor alone
 In the still cave and forest; o'er the
 flower
 His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath
 blown,
 His soft and summer breath, whose
 tender power
 Passes the strength of storms in their
 most desolate hour.

All things are here of *him*; from the
 black pines,
 Which are his shade on high, and the
 loud roar
 Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the
 vines
 Which slope his green path downward
 to the shore,
 Where the bow'd waters meet him, and
 adore,
 Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the
 wood,
 The covert of old trees, with trunks all
 hoar,
 But light leaves, young as joy, stands
 where it stood,
 Offering to him, and his, a populous
 solitude;

A populous solitude of bees and birds,
 And fairy-form'd and many color'd
 things,
 Who worship him with notes more sweet
 than words,
 And innocently open their glad wings,
 Fearless and full of life: the gush of
 springs,
 And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend
 Of stirring branches, and the bud which
 brings
 The swiftest thought of beauty, here
 extend,
 Mingling, and made by Love, unto one
 mighty end.

He who hath loved not, here would learn
 that lore,
 And make his heart a spirit; he who
 knows
 That tender mystery, will love the more;
 For this is Love's recess, where vain men's
 woes,

And the world's waste, have driven him
far from those,
For 't is his nature to advance or die ;
He stands not still, but or decays, or
grows
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
With the immortal lights, in its eternity !

'T was not for fiction chose Rousseau
this spot,
Peopling it with affections ; but he found
It was the scene which Passion must allot
To the mind's purified beings ; 't was the
ground
Where early Love his Psyche's zone
unbound,
And hallow'd it with loveliness ; 't is lone.
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a
sound,
And sense, and sight of sweetness ; here
the Rhone
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps
have rear'd a throne.

Lausanne ! and Ferney ! ye have been
the abodes
Of names which unto you bequeath'd
a name ;
Mortals, who sought and found, by
dangerous roads,
A path to perpetuity of fame :
They were gigantic minds, and their
steep aim
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
Thoughts which should call down
thunder, and the flame
Of Heaven again assail'd, if Heaven the
while
On man and man's research could deign
do more than smile.

The one¹ was fire and fickleness, a child
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
A wit as various,—gay, grave, sage, or
wild,—
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined ;
He multiplied himself among mankind,
The Proteus of their talents : But his own
Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as
the wind,
Blew where it listed, laying all things
prone,—
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to
shake a throne.

The other,² deep and slow, exhausting
thought,

¹ Voltaire.

² Gibbon.

And hiving wisdom with each studious
year,
In meditation dwelt, with learning
wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge
severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn
sneer ;
The lord of irony,—that master-spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath, which
grew from fear,
And doom'd him to the zealot's ready
Hell,
Which answers to all doubts so elo-
quently well.

Yet, peace be with their ashes,—for by
them,
If merited, the penalty is paid ;
It is not ours to judge,—far less con-
demn ;
The hour must come when such things
shall be made
Known unto all, or hope and dread
allay'd
By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must
lie decay'd ;
And when it shall revive, as is our
trust,
'T will be to be forgiven, or suffer what
is just.

But let me quit man's works, again to
read
His Maker's, spread around me, and
suspend
This page, which from my reveries I feed,
Until it seems prolonging without end.
The clouds above me to the white Alps
tend,
And I must pierce them, and survey
whate'er
May be permitted, as my steps I bend
To their most great and growing region,
where
The earth to her embrace compels the
powers of air.

Italia ! too, Italia ! looking on thee,
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost
won thee,
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages
Who glorify thy consecrated pages ;
Thou wert the throne and grave of
empires ; still,
The fount at which the panting mind
assuages

Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there
her fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's
imperial hill.

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme
Renew'd with no kind auspices: to feel
We are not what we have been, and to
deem

We are not what we should be, and to
steel

The heart against itself; and to conceal,
What a proud caution, love, or hate, or
ought,—

Passion or feeling, purpose, grief or
zeal,—

Which is the tyrant spirit of our
thought,

Is a stern task of soul:—No matter,—it
is taught.

And for these words, thus woven into
song,

It may be that they are a harmless
wile,—

The coloring of the scenes which fleet
along,

Which I would seize, in passing, to be-
guile

My breast, or that of others, for a while.
Fame is the thirst of youth, but I am
not

So young as to regard men's frown or
smile,

As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot:
I stood and stand alone,—remember'd or
forgot.

I have not loved the world, nor the world
me;

I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor
bow'd

To its idolatries a patient knee,
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles, nor cried
aloud

In worship of an echo; in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such; I
stood

Among them, but not of them; in a
shroud

Of thoughts which were not their
thoughts, and still could,

Had I not filed my mind, which thus
itself subdued.

I have not loved the world, nor the world
me,—

But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that
there may be

Words which are things, hopes which
will not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful, nor
weave

Snares for the failing; I would also
deem

O'er others' griefs that some sincerely
grieve;

That two, or one, are almost what they
seem,

That goodness is no name, and hap-
piness no dream

My daughter! with thy name this song
begun;

My daughter! with thy name thus much
shall end;

I see thee not, I hear thee not, but none
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the
friend

To whom the shadows of far years ex-
tend;

Albeit my brow thou never shouldst
behold,

My voice shall with thy future visions
blend,

And reach into thy heart, when mine is
cold,

A token and a tone, even from thy
father's mould.

To aid thy mind's development, to watch
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see
Almost thy very growth, to view thee
catch

Knowledge of objects,—wonders yet to
thee!

To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's
kiss,—

This, it should seem, was not reserved
for me;

Yet this was in my nature: as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something
like to this.

Yet, though dull Hate as duty should
be taught,

I know that thou wilt love me; though
my name

Should be shut from thee, as a spell still
fraught

With desolation, and a broken claim;
Though the grave closed between us,—
't were the same,

I know that thou wilt love me; though
to drain

My blood from out thy being were an
aim,

And an attainment,—all would be in
vain,—
Still thou wouldst love me, still that
more than life retain.

The child of love, though born in bit-
terness,
And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire
These were the elements, and thine no
less.

As yet such are around thee, but thy fire
Shall be more temper'd, and thy hope
far higher.

Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er
the sea

And from the mountains where I now
respire,

Fain would I waft such blessing upon
thee,

As with a sigh, I deem thou might'st
have been to me.

May-June, 1816. November 18, 1816.

SONNET ON CHILLON.

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can
bind;

And when thy sons to fetters are con-
sign'd—

To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless
gloom,

Their country conquers with their mar-
tyrdom,

And Freedom's fame finds wings on
every wind.

Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 't was
trod,

Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! May none those marks
efface!

For they appeal from tyranny to God.
June, 1816. December 5, 1816.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON

My hair is gray, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,

As men's have grown from sudden fears;
My limbs are bow'd, though not with
toil.

But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those

To whom the goodly earth and air
Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare;
But this was for my father's faith
I suffer'd chains and courted death;

That father perish'd at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;

We were seven—who now are one,
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finish'd as they had begun,

Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field
Their belief with blood have seal'd,
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and
gray,

Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;

Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;

That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score,
When my last brother droop'd and died,
And I lay living by his side.

They chain'd us each to a column stone
And we were three—yet, each alone,
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together—yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand, but join'd in heart,
'T was still some solace, in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comfortor to each
With some new hope, or legend old
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,

A grating sound, not full and free,
As they of yore were wont to be;
It might be fancy, but to me
They never sounded like our own.

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do—and did my best—
And each did well in his degree.

The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him, with eyes as blue as heaven—
For him my soul was sorely moved;
And truly might it be distress'd
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day—

(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free)—
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flow'd like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

The other was as pure of mind,
But form'd to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had
stood,

And perish'd in the foremost rank
With joy:—but not in chains to pine:
His spirit wither'd with their clank,
I saw it silently decline—

And so perchance in sooth did mine:
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.

He was a hunter of the hills,
Had follow'd there the deer and wolf;
To him his dungeon was a gulf,
And fetter'd feet the worst of ills.

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,

Which round about the wave intrals:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made—and like a living grave
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
We heard it ripple night and day;

Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;
And I have felt the winter's spray

Wash though the bars when winds were
high

And wanton in the happy sky;
And then the very rock hath rock'd,
And I have felt it shake, unshock'd
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captives' tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den;
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;
But why delay the truth?—he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died, and they unlock'd his chain,
And scoop'd for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave,
I begg'd them as a boon to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laugh'd, and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

But he, the favorite and the flower,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyr'd father's dearest thought
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was wither'd on the stalk away.

Oh, God ! it is a fearful thing
 To see the human soul take wing
 In any shape, in any mood :
 I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
 I've seen it on the breaking ocean
 Strive with a sworn convulsive motion,
 I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
 Of Sin delirious with its dread ;
 But these were horrors—this was woe
 Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow :
 He faded, and so calm and meek,
 So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
 So tearless, yet so tender, kind,
 And grieved for those he left behind ;
 With all the while a cheek whose bloom
 Was as a mockery of the tomb,
 Whose tints as gently sunk away
 As a departing rainbow's ray ;
 An eye of most transparent light,
 That almost made the dungeon bright,
 And not a word of murmur, not
 A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
 A little talk of better days,
 A little hope my own to raise,
 For I was sunk in silence—lost
 In this last loss, of all the most ;
 And then the sighs he would suppress
 Of fainting nature's feebleness,
 More slowly drawn, grew less and less :
 I listen'd, but I could not hear ;
 I call'd, for I was wild with fear ;
 I knew 't was hopeless, but my dread
 Would not be thus admonished ;
 I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—
 I burst my chain with one strong bound,
 And rush'd to him :—I found him not,
 I only stirr'd in this black spot,
 I only lived, I only drew
 The accursed breath of dungeon-dew ;
 The last, the sole, the dearest link
 Between me and the eternal brink,
 Which bound me to my failing race,
 Was broken in this fatal place.
 One on the earth, and one beneath—
 My brothers—both had ceased to breathe :
 I took that hand which lay so still,
 Alas ! my own was full as chill ;
 I had not strength to stir, or strive,
 But felt that I was still alive—
 A frantic feeling, when we know
 That what we love shall ne'er be so.
 I know not why
 I could not die,
 I had no earthly hope but faith,
 And that forbade a selfish death.

What next befell me then and there
 I know not well—I never knew—
 First came the loss of light, and air,

And then of darkness too :
 I had no thought, no feeling—none—
 Among the stones I stood a stone,
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
 As shrubless crags within the mist ;
 For all was blank, and bleak, and gray ;
 It was not night, it was not day ;
 It was not even the dungeon-light,
 So hateful to my heavy sight,
 But vacancy absorbing space,
 And fixedness without a place ;
 There were no stars, no earth, no time,
 No check, no change, no good, no crime,
 But silence, and a stirless breath
 Which neither was of life nor death ;
 A sea of stagnant idleness,
 Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless !

A light broke in upon my brain,—
 It was the carol of a bird ;
 It ceased, and then it came again,
 The sweetest song ear ever heard,
 And mine was thankful till my eyes
 Ran over with the glad surprise,
 And they that moment could not see
 I was the mate of misery ;
 But then by dull degrees came back
 My senses to their wonted track ;
 I saw the dungeon walls and floor
 Close slowly round me as before,
 I saw the glimmer of the sun
 Creeping as it before had done,
 But through the crevice where it came
 That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,
 And tamer than upon the tree ;
 A lovely bird, with azure wings,
 And song that said a thousand things,
 And seem'd to say them all for me !
 I never saw its like before,
 I ne'er shall see its likeness more :
 It seem'd like me to want a mate,
 But was not half so desolate,
 And it was come to love me when
 None lived to love me so again,
 And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
 Had brought me back to feel and think.
 I know not if it late were free,
 Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
 But knowing well captivity,
 Sweet bird ! I could not wish for thine !
 Or if it were, in winged guise,
 A visitant from Paradise ;
 For—Heaven forgive that thought ! the
 while
 Which made me both to weep and
 smile—
 I sometimes deem'd that it might be
 My brother's soul come down to me ;
 But then at last away it flew,

And then 'twas mortal well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone,
Lone as the corse within its shroud,
Lone as a solitary cloud,—

A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate ;
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was:—my broken chain
With links unfasten'd did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part ;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod ;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crush'd heart fell blind and
sick.

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all
Who loved me in a human shape ;
And the whole earth would henceforth
be

A wider prison unto me :
No child, no sire, no kin had I,
No partner in my misery ;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad ;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barr'd windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

I saw them, and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame ;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow ;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush ;
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down ;
And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view ;

A small green isle, it seem'd no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers
growing,

Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seem'd joyous each and all ;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seem'd to fly ;
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain ;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load ;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,—
And yet my glance, too much oppress'd,
Had almost need of such a rest.

It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count, I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote ;
At last men came to set me free ;
I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where ;
It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be,
I learn'd to love despair.

And thus when they appear'd at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own !
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home :
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they ?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell !
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell ;
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are:—even I
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

*June 27–29–July 10, 1816. December 5,
1816.*

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find.

Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
 It shrunk not to share it with me,
 And the love which my spirit hath painted
 It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
 The last smile which answers to mine,
 I do not believe it beguiling,
 Because it reminds me of thine;
 And when winds are at war with the ocean,
 As the breasts I believed in with me,
 If their billows excite an emotion,
 It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
 And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
 Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
 To pain—it shall not be its slave.
 There is many a pang to pursue me:
 They may crush, but they shall not condemn;
 They may torture, but shall not subdue me;
 'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
 Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
 Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
 Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake;
 Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
 Though parted, it was not to fly,
 Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
 Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
 Nor the war of the many with one;
 If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
 'Twas folly not sooner to shun:
 And if dearly that error hath cost me,
 And more than I once could foresee,
 I have found that, whatever it lost me,
 It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
 Thus much I at least may recall,
 It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
 Deserved to be dearest of all:

In the desert a fountain is springing,
 In the wide waste there still is a tree
 And a bird in the solitude singing,
 Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.
July 24, 1816. December 5, 1816.

EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA

My sister! my sweet sister! if a name
 Dearer and purer were, it should be thine;
 Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
 No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:
 Go where I will, to me thou art the same—
 A loved regret which I would not resign.
 There yet are two things in my destiny,—
 A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

The first were nothing—had I still the last,
 It were the haven of my happiness;
 But other claims and other ties thou hast,
 And mine is not the wish to make them less.
 A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past
 Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;
 Reversed for him our grandsire's fate of yore,—
 He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

If my inheritance of storms hath been
 In other elements, and on the rocks
 Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,
 I have sustain'd my share of worldly shocks,
 The fault was mine; nor do I seek to screen
 My errors with defensive paradox;
 I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
 The careful pilot of my proper woe.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.
 My whole life was a contest, since the day
 That gave me being, gave me that which marr'd
 The gift,—a fate, or will, that walk'd astray;
 And I at times have found the struggle hard,
 And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay:
 But now I fain would for a time survive,
 If but to see what next can well arrive.

Kingdoms and empires in my little day
I have outlived, and yet I am not old ;
And when I look on this, the petty spray
Of my own years of trouble, which have
roll'd

Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away :
Something—I know not what—does still
uphold

A spirit of slight patience ;—not in vain,
Even for its own sake, do we purchase
pain.

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir
Within me—or perhaps a cold despair,
Brought on when ills habitually recur,—
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
(For even to this may change of soul
refer,

And with light armor we may learn to
bear.)

Have taught me a strange quiet, which
was not

The chief companion of a calmer lot.

I feel almost at times as I have felt
In happy childhood ; trees, and flowers,
and brooks,

Which do remember me of where I dwelt
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to
books,

Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
My heart with recognition of their looks ;
And even at moments I could think I
see

Some living thing to love—but none like
thee.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which
create

A fund for contemplation ;—to admire
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date ;
But something worthier do such scenes
inspire ;

Here to be lonely is not desolate,
For much I view which I could most de-
sire,

And, above all, a lake I can behold
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

Oh that thou wert but with me !—but I
grow

The fool of my own wishes, and forget
The solitude which I have vaunted so
Has lost its praise in this but one regret ;
There may be others which I less may
show !—

I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

I did remind thee of our own dear Lake
By the old Hall which may be mine no
more.

Leman's is fair ; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer
shore :

Sad havoc Time must with my memory
make,

Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes
before ;

Though, like all things which I have
loved, they are

Resign'd for ever, or divided far.

The world is all before me ; I but ask
Of Nature that with which she will
comply—

It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
To see her gentle face without a mask,
And never gaze on it with apathy.

She was my early friend, and now shall
be

My sister—till I look again on thee.

I can reduce all feelings but this one ;
And that I would not ;—for at length
I see

Such scenes as those wherein my life
began.

The earliest—even the only paths for
me—

Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to
shun,

I had been better than I now can be :
The passions which have torn me would
have slept ;

I had not suffer'd and *thou* hadst not
wept.

With false Ambition what had I to do ?
Little with Love, and least of all with
Fame ;

And yet they came unsought, and with
me grew,

And made me all which they can make
—a name.

Yet this was not the end I did pursue ;
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.

But all is over—I am one the more
To baffled millions which have gone
before.

And for the future, this world's future
may

From me demand but little of my care ;
I have outlived myself by many a day ;
Having survived so many things *that*
were ;

My years have been no slumber, but the
 prey
 Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share
 Of life which might have fill'd a century,
 Before its fourth in time had pass'd
 me by.

And for the remnant which may be to
 come
 I am content; and for the past I feel
 Not thankless,—for within the crowded
 sum
 Of struggles, happiness at times would
 steal,
 And for the present, I would not benumb
 My feelings further.—Nor shall I conceal
 That with all this I still can look around,
 And worship Nature with a thought
 profound.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy
 heart
 I know myself secure, as thou in mine;
 We were and are—I am, even as thou
 art—
 Beings who ne'er each other can resign:
 It is the same, together or apart,
 From life's commencement to its slow
 decline
 We are entwined—let death come slow
 or fast,
 The tie which bound the first endures
 the last! *July, 1816. 1830.*

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

THEY say that Hope is happiness;
 But genuine Love must prize the past,
 And Memory wakes the thoughts that
 bless:

They rose the first—they set the last;

And all that Memory loves the most
 Was once our only Hope to be,
 And all that Hope adored and lost
 Hath melted into Memory.

Alas! it is delusion all;
 The future cheats us from afar,
 Nor can we be what we recall,
 Nor dare we think on what we are.
£. . . 1829.

DARKNESS

I HAD a dream, which was not all a
 dream.
 The bright sun was extinguish'd, and
 the stars

Did wander darkling in the eternal
 space,
 Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
 Swung blind and blackening in the
 moonless air;
 Morn came and went—and came, and
 brought no day,
 And men forgot their passions in the
 dread
 Of this their desolation; and all hearts
 Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for
 light;
 And they did live by watchfires—and
 the thrones,
 The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
 The habitations of all things which
 dwell,
 Were burnt for beacons; cities were
 consumed,
 And men were gather'd round their
 blazing homes
 To look once more into each other's
 face;
 Happy were those who dwelt within the
 eye
 Of the volcanos, and their mountain-
 torch;
 A fearful hope was all the world con-
 tain'd;
 Forests were set on fire—but hour by
 hour
 They fell and faded—and the crackling
 trunks
 Extinguish'd with a crash—and all was
 black.
 The brows of men by the despairing light
 Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
 The flashes fell upon them; some lay
 down
 And hid their eyes and wept; and some
 did rest
 Their chins upon their clenched hands,
 and smiled;
 And others hurried to and fro, and fed
 Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd
 up
 With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
 The pall of a past world; and then again
 With curses cast them down upon the
 dust,
 And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the
 wild birds shriek'd
 And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
 And flap their useless wings; the wild-
 est brutes
 Came tame and tremulous; and vipers
 crawl'd
 And twined themselves among the mul-
 titude,

Hissing, but stingless—they were slain
for food !
And War, which for a moment was no
more,
Did glut himself again :—a meal was
bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom : no love was
left ;
All earth was but one thought—and that
was death
Immediate and inglorious ; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men
Died, and their bones were tombless as
their flesh ;
The meagre by the meagre were de-
vour'd,
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save
one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and
kept
The birds and beasts and famish'd men
at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping
dead
Lured their lank jaws ; himself sought
out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
And a quick desolate cry, licking the
hand
Which answer'd not with a caress—he
died.
The crowd was famish'd by degrees ; but
two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies : they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy
things
For an unholy usage ; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold
skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery ; then they lifted
up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects—saw, and shriek'd,
and died—
Even of their mutual hideousness they
died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose
brow
Famine had written Fiend. The world
was void,
The populous and the powerful was a
lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless,
lifeless,

A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood
still,
And nothing stirr'd within their silent
depths ;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal :
as they dropp'd
They slept on the abyss without a
surge—
The waves were dead ; the tides were in
their grave,
The moon, their mistress, had expired
before ;
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant
air,
And the clouds perish'd ; Darkness had
no need
Of aid from them—She was the Uni-
verse.

July, 1816. December 5, 1816.

PROMETHEUS

TITAN ! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise ;
What was thy pity's recompense ?
A silent suffering, and intense ;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

Titan ! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot
kill ;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die ;
The wretched gift eternity
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from
thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack ;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell ;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,

And evil dread so ill dissembled,
That in his hand the lightnings
trembled.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind ;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not
convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit;
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To Mortals of their fate and force ;
Like thee, Man is in part divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source ;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny ;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence :
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself—and equal to all woes,
And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concentr'd recompense,
Triumphant where it dare defy,
And making Death a Victory.

July, 1816. December, 1816.

SONNET TO LAKE LEMAN

ROUSSEAU—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and
De Staël—
Leman ! these names are worthy of thy
shore,
Thy shore of names like these ! wert
thou no more
Their memory thy remembrance would
recall :
To them thy banks were lovely as to
all,
But they have made them lovelier, for
the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the
core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous ;
but by *thee*
How much more, Lake of Beauty ! do
we feel,
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystalsea,
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory
real !

July, 1816. December 5, 1816.

MANFRED

A DRAMATIC POEM

"There are more things in heaven and earth
Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

MANFRED
CHAMOIS HUNTER
ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE
MANUEL
HERMAN
WITCH OF THE ALPS
ARIMANES
NEMESIS
THE DESTINIES
SPIRITS, &c.

*The Scene of the Drama is amongst the
Higher Alps—partly in the Castle of
Manfred, and partly in the Moun-
tains.*

ACT I

SCENE I.—MANFRED *alone*.—*Scene, a
Gothic Gallery.—Time, Midnight.*

Man. The lamp must be replenish'd, but
even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch :
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,
But a continuance of enduring thought,
Which then I can resist not : in my heart
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close
To look within ; and yet I live, and bear
The aspect and the form of breathing men.
But grief should be the instructor of the
wise ;
Sorrow is knowledge : they who know the
most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal
truth,
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of
Life.
Philosophy and science, and the springs
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself—
But they avail not : I have done men good,
And I have met with good even among
men—
But this avail'd not : I have had my foes,
And none have baffled, many fallen be-
fore me—

But this avail'd not :—Good, or evil, life,
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no
dread,

And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with
hopes or wishes,

Or lurking love of something on the earth.
Now to my task.—

Mysterious agency !
Ye spirits of the unbounded Universe !
Whom I have sought in darkness and in
light—

Ye, who do compass earth about, and
dwell

In subtler essence—ye, to whom the tops
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,
And earth's and ocean's caves familiar
things—

I call upon ye by the written charm
Which gives me power upon you—Rise !
Appear ! *[A pause.]*

They come not yet.—Now by the voice
of him

Who is the first among you—by this sign,
Which makes you tremble—by the claims
of him

Who is undying,—Rise ! Appear !—
Appear ! *[A pause.]*

If it be so—Spirits of earth and air,
Ye shall not thus elude me : by a power,
Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,
Which had its birthplace in a star con-
demn'd,

The burning wreck of a demolish'd
world,

A wandering hell in the eternal space ;
By the strong curse which is upon my
soul,

The thought which is within me and
around me,

I do compel ye to my will—Appear !

*[A star is seen at the darker end
of the gallery : it is stationary ; and a
voice is heard singing.]*

FIRST SPIRIT

Mortal ! to thy bidding bow'd,
From my mansion in the cloud,
Which the breath of twilight builds,
And the summer's sunset gilds
With the azure and vermilion,
Which is mix'd for my pavilion ;
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden :
To thine adjuration bow'd,
Mortal—be thy wish avow'd !

SECOND SPIRIT

Mont Blanc is the monarch of moun-
tains ;

They crown'd him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.

Around his waist are forests braced,

The Avalanche in his hand ;

But ere it fall, that thundering ball

Must pause for my command.

The Glacier's cold and restless mass

Moves onward day by day ;

But I am he who bids it pass,

Or with its ice delay.

I am the spirit of the place,

Could make the mountain bow

And quiver to his cavern'd base—

And what with me wouldst *Thou* ?

THIRD SPIRIT

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,

Where the wind is a stranger,

And the sea-snake hath life,

Where the Mermaid is decking

Her green hair with shells,

Like the storm on the surface

Came the sound of thy spells ;

O'er my calm Hall of Coral

The deep echo roll'd—

To the Spirit of Ocean

Thy wishes unfold !

FOURTH SPIRIT

Where the slumbering earthquake

Lies pillow'd on fire,

And the lakes of bitumen

Rise boilingly higher ;

Where the roots of the Andes

Strike deep in the earth,

As their summits to heaven

Shoot soaringly forth ;

I have quitted my birthplace,

Thy bidding to bide—

Thy spell hath subdued me,

Thy will be my guide !

FIFTH SPIRIT

I am the Rider of the wind,

The stirrer of the storm ;

The hurricane I left behind

Is yet with lightning warm ;

To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea

I swept upon the blast ;

The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet

'Twill sink ere night be past.

SIXTH SPIRIT

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,
Why doth thy magic torture me with
light?

SEVENTH SPIRIT

The star which rules thy destiny
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me :
It was a world as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round sun in air ;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.
The hour arrived—and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless comet, and a curse,
The menace of the universe ;
Still rolling on with innate force,
Without a sphere, without a course,
A bright deformity on high,
The monster of the upper sky !
And thou ! beneath its influence born—
Thou worm ! whom I obey and scorn—
Forced by a power (which is not thine,
And lent thee but to make thee mine)
For this brief moment to descend,
Where these weak spirits round thee bend
And parley with a thing like thee—
What wouldst thou, Child of Clay ! with
me ?

The SEVEN SPIRITS

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains,
winds, thy star,
Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of
Clay !
Before thee at thy quest their spirits
are—
What wouldst thou with us, son of
mortals—say ?

Man. Forgetfulness—

First Spirit. Of what—of whom—and
why ?

Man. Of that which is within me ;
read it there —

Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

Spirit. We can but give thee that
which we possess :

Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the
power

O'er earth—the whole, or portion—or a
sign

Which shall control the elements, where-
of

We are the dominators,—each and all,
These shall be thine.

Man. Oblivion, self-oblivion !

Can ye not wring from out the hidden
realms

Ye offer so profusely what I ask ?

Spirit. It is not in our essence, in our
skill ;

But—thou may'st die.

Man. Will death bestow it on me ?

Spirit. We are immortal, and do not
forget ;

We are eternal ; and to us the past
Is, as the future, present. Art thou
answer'd ?

Man. Ye mock me—but the power
which brought ye here

Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not
at my will !

The mind, the spirit, the Promethean
spark,

The lightning of my being, is as bright,
Pervading, and far darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours, though
coop'd in clay !

Answer, or I will teach you what I am.

Spirit. We answer as we answer'd ;
our reply

Is even in thine own words.

Man. Why say ye so ?

Spirit. If, as thou say'st, thine
essence be as ours,

We have replied in telling thee, the thing
Mortals call death hath nought to do
with us.

Man. I then have call'd ye from your
realms in vain ;

Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

Spirit. Say,
What we possess we offer ; it is thine :
Bethink ere thou dismiss us ; ask again ;
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and
length of days—

Man. Accursed ! what have I to do
with days ?

They are too long already.—Hence—be-
gone !

Spirit. Yet pause : being here, our
will would do thee service ;

Bethink thee, is there then no other gift
Which we can make not worthless in
thine eyes ?

Man. No, none : yet stay—one mo-
ment, ere we part,

I would behold ye face to face. I hear
Your voices, sweet and melancholy
sounds,

As music on the waters ; and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large star ;

But nothing more. Approach me as ye
are,

Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.

Spirit. We have no forms, beyond
the elements
Of which we are the mind and principle :
But choose a form—in that we will appear.

Man. I have no choice; there is no
form on earth
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,
Who is most powerful of ye, take such
aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting—
Come!

*Seventh Spirit (appearing in the shape
of a beautiful female figure).* Be-
hold!

Man. Oh God! if it be thus, and thou
Art not a madness and a mockery,
I yet might be most happy, I will clasp
thee,
And we again will be——

[*The figure vanishes.*
My heart is crush'd!
[*MANFRED falls senseless.*

(*A voice is heard in the Incantation
which follows.*)

When the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,
And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass;
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answer'd owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not
banish;

By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare;
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;
And to thee shall night deny
All the quiet of her sky;
And the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thy own smile I snatch'd the
snake,

For there it coil'd as in a brake;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest
harm;

In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;
By the perfection of thine art
Which pass'd for human thine own
heart;

By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compel
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny;
Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear;
Lo! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;
O'er thy heart and brain together
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither!

SCENE II

*The Mountain of the Jungfrau.—Time,
Morning.—MANFRED alone upon the
Cliffs.*

Man. The spirits I have raised abandon me,
The spells which I have studied baffle me,
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me;
I lean no more on superhuman aid;
It hath no power upon the past, and for
The future, till the past be gulf'd in
darkness,

It is not of my search. My mother
Earth!
And thou fresh breaking Day, and you,
ye Mountains,
Why are ye beautifui? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That openest over all, and unto all
Art a delight—thou shin'st not on my
heart.
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme
edge
I stand, and on the torrent's brink be-
neath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to
shrubs
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would
bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause?
I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge;
I see the peril—yet do not recede;
And my brain reels—and yet my foot is
firm:
There is a power upon me which with-
holds,
And makes it my fatality to live,—
If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of spirit, and to be
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have
ceased
To justify my deeds unto myself—
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minis-
ter, [An eagle passes.
Whose happy flight is highest into
heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I
should be
Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou
art gone
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but
thine
Yet pierces downward, onward, or above,
With a pervading vision.—Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sover-
eigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence
make
A conflict of its elements, and breathe
The breath of degradation and of pride,
Contending with low wants and lofty
will,
Till our mortality predominates,
And men are—what they name not to
themselves,

And trust not to each other. Hark! the
note, [The Shepherd's pipe in
the distance is heard.
The natural music of the mountain
reed—
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the saun-
tering herd;
My soul would drink those echoes. Oh,
that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment—born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!

Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Chamois Hunter. Even so
This way the chamois leapt: her nimble
feet
Have baffled me; my gains to-day will
scarce
Repay my break-neck travail.—What is
here?
Who seems not of my trade, and yet
hath reach'd
A height which none even of our moun-
taineers,
Save our best hunters, may attain: his
garb
Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air
Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this
distance:
I will approach him nearer.
Man. (not perceiving the other). To be
thus—
Gray-hair'd with anguish, like these
blasted pines,
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless,
branchless,
A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,
Which but supplies a feeling to decay—
And to be thus, eternally but thus,
Having been otherwise! now furrow'd
o'er
With wrinkles, plough'd by moments,—
not by years,—
And hours, all tortured into ages—
hours
Which I outlive!—Ye toppling crags of
ice!
Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws
down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and
crush me!
I hear ye momentarily above, beneath,
Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye
pass,

And only fall on things that still would live;

On the young flourishing forest, or the hut

And hamlet of the harmless villager.

C. Hun. The mists begin to rise from up the valley;

I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance

To lose at once his way and life together.

Man. The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds

Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,

Like foam from the roused ocean of deep Hell,

Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,

Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles.—I am giddy.

C. Hun. I must approach him cautiously; if near,

A sudden step will startle him, and he Seems tottering already.

Man. Mountains have fallen, Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock

Rocking their alpine brethren; filling up

The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters;

Damming the rivers with a sudden dash, Which crush'd the waters into mist and made

Their fountains find another channel—thus,

Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg—

Why stood I not beneath it?

C. Hun. Friend! have a care, Your next step may be fatal!—for the love

Of him who made you, stand not on that brink!

Man. (*not hearing him*). Such would have been for me a fitting tomb;

My bones had then been quiet in their depth;

They had not then been strewn upon the rocks

For the wind's pastime—as thus—thus they shall be—

In this one plunge.—Farewell, ye opening heavens!

Look not upon me thus reproachfully—You were not meant for me—Earth!

take these atoms!

[*As MANFRED is in act to spring from the cliff, the CHAMOIS HUNTER*

seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.

C. Hun. Hold, madman!—though aweary of thy life, Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood:

Away with me—I will not quit my hold.

Man. I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—

I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl

Spinning around me—I grow blind—What art thou?

C. Hun. I'll answer that anon. Away with me—

The clouds grow thicker—there—now lean on me—

Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling

A moment to that shrub—now give me your hand,

And hold fast by my girdle—softly—well—

The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour: Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,

And something like a pathway, which the torrent

Hath wash'd since winter.—Come, 't is bravely done—

You should have been a hunter.—Follow me.

[*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene closes.*

ACT II

SCENE I.—*A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.*

MANFRED and the CHAMOIS HUNTER.

C. Hun. No, no—yet pause—thou must not yet go forth:

Thy mind and body are alike unfit

To trust each other, for some hours, at least;

When thou art better, I will be thy guide—

But whither?

Man. It imports not: I do know My route full well, and need no further guidance

C. Hun. Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage—

One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags

Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these

May call thee lord? I only know their
portals;

My way of life leads me but rarely down
To bask by the huge hearths of those old
halls,

Carousing with the vassals; but the paths,
Which step from out our mountains to
their doors,

I know from childhood—which of these
is thine?

Man. No matter.

C. Hun. Well, sir, pardon me the
question,

And be of better cheer. Come, taste my
wine;

'Tis of an ancient vintage; many a day
'T has thaw'd my veins among our
glaciers

Let it do thus for thine—Come, pledge
me fairly.

Man. Away, away! there's blood upon
the brim!

Vill it then never—never sink in the
earth?

C. Hun. What dost thou mean? thy
senses wander from thee.

Man. I say 'tis blood—my blood! the
pure warm stream

Which ran in the veins of my fathers,
and in ours

When we were in our youth, and had
one heart,

And loved each other as we should not
love,

And this was shed: but still it rises up,
Coloring the clouds, that shut me out
from heaven,

Where thou art not—and I shall never be.

C. Hun. Man of strange words, and
some half-maddening sin,

Which makes thee people vacancy,
whate'er

Thy dread and sufferance be, there's
comfort yet—

The aid of holy men, and heavenly
patience—

Man. Patience and patience!
Hence—that word was made

For brutes of burthen, not for birds of
prey;

Preach it to mortals of a dust like
thine,—

I am not of thine order.

C. Hun. Thanks to heaven!
I would not be of thine for the free fame

Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine
ill,

It must be borne, and these wild starts
are useless.

Man. Do I not bear it?—Look on me—
I live.

C. Hun. This is convulsion, and no
healthful life.

Man. I tell thee, man! I have lived
many years,

Many long years, but they are nothing
now

To those which I must number: ages—
ages—

Space and eternity—and consciousness,
With the fierce thirst of death—and still
unslaked!

C. Hun. Why, on thy brow the seal
of middle age

Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder
far.

Man. Think'st thou existence doth
depend on time?

It doth; but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable,

Endless, and all alike, as sands on the
shore.

Innumerable atoms; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild

waves break,
But nothing rests, save carcasses and

wrecks,
Rocks and the salt-surf weeds of bitter-

ness.

C. Hun. Alas! he's mad—but yet
I must not leave him.

Man. I would I were—for then the
things I see

Would be but a distemper'd dream.

C. Hun. What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st

upon?

Man. Myself, and thee—a peasant of
the Alps—

Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and

free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent

thoughts;
The days of health, and nights of sleep;

thy toils,
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes

Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over its green

turf,
And thy grandchildren's love for epi-

taph;
This do I see—and then I look within—

It matters not—my soul was scorched al-
ready!

C. Hun. And wouldst thou then ex-
change thy lot for mine?

Man. No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange My lot with living being: I can bear— However wretchedly, 'tis still to bear— In life what others could not brook to dream,

But perish in their slumber.

C. Hun. And with this— This cautious feeling for another's pain, Canst thou be black with evil?—say not so.

Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge

Upon his enemies?

Man. Oh! no, no, no!

My injuries came down on those who loved me—

On those whom I best loved: I never quelled

An enemy, save in my just defence—

But my embrace was fatal.

C. Hun. Heaven give thee rest! And penitence restore thee to thyself; My prayers shall be for thee.

Man. I need them not— But can endure thy pity. I depart— 'Tis time—farewell!—Here's gold, and thanks for thee—

No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not—

I know my path—the mountain peril's past:

And once again I charge thee, follow not!

[*Exit* MANFRED.]

SCENE II

A lower Valley in the Alps.—A Cataract.

Enter MANFRED.

It is not noon—the sunbow's rays still arch

The torrent with the many hues of heaven,

And roll the sheeted silver's waving column

O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular, And fling its lines of foaming light along, And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,

The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death, As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;

I should be sole in this sweet solitude, And with the Spirit of the place divide The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

[MANFRED takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it into the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the WITCH OF THE ALPS rises beneath the arch of the sunbow of the torrent.

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light, And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form

The charms of earth's least mortal daughters grow

To an unearthly stature, in an essence Of purer elements; while the hues of youth,—

Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,

Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,

Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves

Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow, The blush of earth embracing with her heaven—

Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame

The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.

Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow, Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul, Which of itself shows immortality, I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son Of Earth, whom the abstruser powers permit

At times to commune with them—if that he

Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,

And gaze on thee a moment.

Witch. Son of Earth!

I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;

I know thee for a man of many thoughts, And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,

Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.

I have expected this—what wouldst thou with me?

Man. To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.

The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I

Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce To the abodes of those who govern her— But they can nothing aid me. I have sought

From them what they could not bestow, and now

I search no further.

Witch. What could be the quest
Which is not in the power of the most
powerful,
The rulers of the invisible?

Man. A boon;
But why should I repeat it? 'twere in
vain.

Witch. I know not that; let thy lips
utter it.

Man. Well, though it torture me, 'tis
but the same;

My pang shall find a voice. From my
youth upwards

My spirit walk'd not with the souls of
men,

Nor look'd upon the earth with human
eyes;

The thirst of their ambition was not
mine,

The aim of their existence was not
mine;

My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my
powers,

Made me a stranger; though I wore the
form,

I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor midst the creatures of clay that
girded me

Was there but one who—but of her anon.
I said with men, and with the thoughts of
men,

I held but slight communion; but instead
My joy was in the wilderness,—to
breathe

The difficult air of the iced mountain's
top,

Where the birds dare not build, nor in-
sect's wing

Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along

On the swift whirl of the new breaking
wave

Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted; or

To follow through the night the moving
moon,

The stars and their development; or
catch

The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew
dim;

Or to look, list'ning, on the scattered
leaves,

While Autumn winds were at their even-
ing song.

These were my pastimes, and to be alone;
For if the beings, of whom I was one,—

Hating to be so,—cross'd me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them,

And was all clay again. And then I dived,

In my lone wanderings, to the caves of
death,

Searching its cause in its effect; and
drew

From wither'd bones, and skull, and
heap'd up dust,

Conclusions most forbidden. Then I
pass'd

The nights of years in sciences untaught
Save in the old time; and with time and

toil,
And terrible ordeal, and such penance

As in itself hath power upon the air,
And spirits that do compass air and

earth,
Space, and the peopled infinite, I made

Mine eyes familiar with Eternity,
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and

He who from out their fountain dwell-
ings raised

Eros and Anteros, at Gadara,
As I do thee;—and with my knowledge

grew
The thirst of knowledge, and the power
and joy

Of this most bright intelligence, until—
Witch. Proceed.

Man. Oh! I but thus prolong'd my
words,

Boasting these idle attributes, because
As I approach the core of my heart's

grief—
But to my task, I have not named to thee

Father or mother, mistress, friend, or
being,

With whom I wore the chain of human
ties;

If I had such, they seem'd not such to me;
Yet there was one—

Witch. Spare not thyself—proceed.
Man. She was like me in lineaments;

her eyes,
Her hair, her features, all, to the very

tone
Even of her voice, they said were like

to mine;
But soften'd all, and temper'd into

beauty:
She had the same lone thoughts and

wanderings,
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a

mind
To comprehend the universe: nor these

Alone, but with them gentler powers
than mine,

Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had
not;

And tenderness—but that I had for her;
Humility—and that I never had.

Her faults were mine—her virtues were
her own—

I loved her, and destroy'd her!

Witch. With thy hand?

Man. Not with my hand, but heart,
which broke her heart;

It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have
shed

Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood
was shed;

I saw—and could not stanch it.

Witch. And for this—

A being of the race thou dost despise,
The order, which thine own would rise
above,

Mingling with us and ours,—thou dost
forego

The gifts of our great knowledge, and
shrink'st back

To recreant mortality—Away!

Man. Daughter of Air! I tell thee,
since that hour—

But words are breath—look on me in my
sleep,

Or watch my watchings—Come and sit
by me!

My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies;—I have
gnash'd

My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then curs'd myself till sunset;—I have
pray'd

For madness as a blessing—'tis denied
me,

I have affronted death—but in the war
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,
And fatal things pass'd harmless; the
cold hand

Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,
Back by a single hair, which would not
break

In fantasy, imagination, all
The affluence of my soul—which one day
was

A Cæus in creation—I plunged deep
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me
back

Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.
I plunged amidst mankind—Forgetful-
ness

I sought in all, save where 'tis to be
found,

And that I have to learn; my sciences,
My long-pursued and superhuman art,
Is mortal here: I dwell in my despair—
And live—and live for ever.

Witch. It may be

That I can aid thee.

Man. To do this thy power

Must wake the dead, or lay me low with
them.

Do so—in any shape—in any hour—

With any torture—so it be the last.

Witch. That is not in my province;
but if thou

Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do
My bidding, it may help thee to thy
wishes.

Man. I will not swear—Obey! and
whom? the spirits

Whose presence I command, and be the
slave

Of those who served me—Never!

Witch. Is this all?

Hast thou no gentler answer?—Yet be-
think thee,

And pause ere thou rejectest.

Man. I have said it.

Witch. Enough! I may retire then—
say!

Man. Retire!

[*The WITCH disappears.*]

Man. (*alone*). We are the fools of time
and terror: Days

Steal on us, and steal from us; yet we live,
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.

In all the days of this detested yoke—
This vital weight upon the struggling

heart,
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick
with pain,

Or joy that ends in agony or faintness—
In all the days of past and future, for

In life there is no present, we can number
How few—how less than few—wherein
the soul

Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws
back

As from a stream in winter, though the
chill

Be but a moment's. I have one resource
Still in my science—I can call the dead,

And ask them what it is we dread to be;
The sternest answer can but be the Grave,

And that is nothing. If they answer
not—

The buried Prophet answered to the Hag
Of Endor; and the Spartan Monarch

drew
From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping
spirit

An answer and his destiny—he slew
That which he loved, unknowing **what**

he slew,

And died unpardon'd—though he call'd
in aid

The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia
roused

The Arcadian Evocators to compel
 The indignant shadow to depose her
 wrath,
 Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied
 In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.
 If I had never lived, that which I love
 Had still been living; had I never loved,
 That which I love would still be beautiful,
 Happy and giving happiness. What is
 she?
 What is she now?—a sufferer for my
 sins—
 A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing.
 Within few hours I shall not call in
 vain—
 Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:
 Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze
 On spirit, good or evil—now I tremble,
 And feel a strange cold thaw upon my
 heart.
 But I can act even what I most abhor,
 And champion human fears.—The night
 approaches. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III

The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.

Enter FIRST DESTINY.

The moon is rising broad, and round, and
 bright;
 And here on snows, where never human
 foot
 Of common mortal trod, we nightly
 tread,
 And leave no traces: o'er the savage sea,
 The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
 We skim its rugged breakers, which put
 on
 The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,
 Frozen in a moment—a dead whirlpool's
 image:
 And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
 The fretwork of some earthquake—
 where the clouds
 Pause to repose themselves in passing
 by—
 Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;
 Here do I wait my sisters, on our way
 To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night
 Is our great festival—'t is strange they
 come not.

A Voice without, singing.

The Captive Usurper,
 Hurl'd down from the throne,

Lay buried in torpor,
 Forgotten and lone;
 I broke through his slumbers,
 I shiver'd his chain,
 I leagu'd him with numbers—
 He's Tyrant again!
 With the blood of a million he'll answer
 my care,
 With a nation's destruction—his flight
 and despair.

Second Voice, without.

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,
 But I left not a sail, and I left not a
 mast;
 There is not a plank of the hull or the
 deck,
 And there is not a wretch to lament o'er
 his wreck;
 Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by
 the hair,
 And he was a subject well worthy my
 care;
 A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea,—
 But I saved him to wreak further havoc
 for me!

FIRST DESTINY, answering.

The city lies sleeping;
 The morn, to deplore it,
 May dawn on it weeping:
 Sullenly, slowly.
 The black plague flew o'er it—
 Thousands lie lowly;
 Tens of thousands shall perish;
 The living shall fly from
 The sick they should cherish;
 But nothing can vanquish
 The touch that they die from.
 Sorrow and anguish,
 And evil and dread,
 Envelop a nation;
 The blest are the dead,
 Who see not the sight
 Of their own desolation;
 This work of a night—
 This wreck of a realm—this deed of my
 doing—
 For ages I've done, and shall still be re-
 newing!

Enter the SECOND and THIRD DESTINIES

The Three.

Our hands contain the hearts of men,
 Our footsteps are their graves;
 We only give to take again
 The spirits of our slaves!

First Des. Welcome!—Where's Nemesis?

Second Des. At some great work;
But what I know not, for my hands were full.

Third Des. Behold she cometh.

Enter NEMESIS.

First Des. Say, where hast thou been?
My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.

Nem. I was detain'd repairing
shatter'd thrones,
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,
Avenging men upon their enemies,
And making them repent their own revenge;
Goaded the wise to madness; from the dull

Shaping out oracles to rule the world
Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,
And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,
To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away!
We have outstay'd the hour—mount we
our clouds! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV

The Hall of Arimanes—Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.

Hymn of the SPIRITS.

Hail to our Master!—Prince of Earth
and Air!

Who walks the clouds and waters—in
his hand

The sceptre of the elements, which tear
Themselves to chaos at his high
command!

He breatheth—and a tempest shakes
the sea;

He speaketh—and the clouds reply in
thunder;

He gazeth—from his glance the sun-
beams flee;

He moveth—earthquakes rend the
world asunder.

Beneath his footsteps the volcanoes rise;
His shadow in the Pestilence; his path
The comets herald through the crackling
skies;

And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.
To him War offers daily sacrifice;

To him Death pays his tribute; Life
is his,

With all its infinite of agonies—
And his the spirit of whatever is!

Enter the DESTINIES and NEMESIS.

First Des. Glory to Arimanes! on the
earth
His power increaseth—both my sisters
did

His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!

Second Des. Glory to Arimanes! we
who bow

The necks of men, bow down before his
throne!

Third Des. Glory to Arimanes! we
await His nod!

Nem. Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are
thine,

And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,
And most things wholly so; still to
increase

Our power, increasing thine, demands
our care,

And we are vigilant. Thy late commands
Have been fulfill'd to the utmost.

Enter MANFRED.

A Spirit. What is here?
A mortal!—Thou most rash and fatal
wretch,

Bow down and worship!

Second Spirit. I do know the man—
A Magian of great power, and fearful
skill!

Third Spirit. Bow down and worship,
slave!—

What, know'st thou not
Thine and our Sovereign?—Tremble,
and obey!

All the Spirits. Prostrate thyself, and
thy condemned clay,

Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.

Man. I know it;
And yet ye see I kneel not.

Fourth Spirit. 'T will be taught thee.

Man. 'T is taught already;—many a
night on the earth,

On the bare ground, have I bow'd down
my face,

And strew'd my head with ashes; I have
known

The fulness of humiliation, for
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation.

Fifth Spirit. Dost thou dare
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne
What the whole earth accords, behold-
ing not

The terror of his glory?—Crouch, I say,
Man. Bid *him* bow down to that
 which is above him,

The overruling Infinite—the Maker
 Who made him not for worship—let
 him kneel,

And we will kneel together.

The Spirits. Crush the worm !
 Tear him in pieces !—

First Des. Hence ! avaunt ! — he's
 mine.

Prince of the Powers invisible ! This
 man

Is of no common order, as his port
 And presence here denote ; his sufferings
 Have been of an immortal nature, like
 Our own ; his knowledge, and his powers
 and will,

As far as is compatible with clay,
 Which clogs the ethereal essence, have
 been such

As clay hath seldom borne ; his aspira-
 tions

Have been beyond the dwellers of the
 earth,

And they have only taught him what
 we know—

That knowledge is not happiness, and
 science

But an exchange of ignorance for that
 Which is another kind of ignorance.

This is not all—the passions, attributes
 Of earth and heaven, from which no
 power, nor being,

Nor breath from the worm upwards is
 exempt,

Have pierced his heart, and in their
 consequence

Made him a thing which I, who pity not,
 Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,

And thine, it may be ; be it so, or not,
 No other Spirit in this region hath

A soul like his—or power upon his soul.

Nem. What doth he here then ?

First Des. Let him answer that.

Man. Ye know what I have known ;
 and without power

I could not be amongst ye : but there are
 Powers deeper still beyond—I come in
 quest

Of such, to answer unto what I seek.

Nem. What wouldst thou ?

Man. Thou canst not reply to me.
 Call up the dead—my question is for
 them.

Nem. Great Arimanes, doth thy will
 avouch

The wishes of this mortal ?

Ari. Yea.

Nem. Whom wouldst thou
 Uncharnel ?

Man. One without a tomb—call up
 Astarte.

NEMESIS

Shadow ! or Spirit !

Whatever thou art,

Which still doth inherit

The whole or a part

Of the form of thy birth,

Of the mould of thy clay,

Which return'd to the earth,

Re-appear to the day !

Bear what thou borest,

The heart and the form,

And the aspect thou worst

Redeem from the worm.

Appear !—Appear !—Appear !

Who sent thee there requires thee here !

[*The Phantom of ASTARTE rises
 and stands in the midst.*]

Man. Can this be death ? there's
 bloom upon her cheek ;

But now I see it is no living hue,

But a strange hectic—like the unnatural
 red

Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd
 leaf.

It is the same ! Oh, God ! that I should
 dread

To look upon the same—Astarte !—No.

I cannot speak to her—but bid her
 speak—

Forgive me or condemn me.

NEMESIS

By the power which hath broken

The grave which enthrall'd thee,

Speak to him who hath spoken,

Or those who have call'd thee !

Man. She is silent,
 And in that silence I am more than an-
 swer'd.

Nem. My power extends no further,
 Prince of Air !

It rests with thee alone—command her
 voice.

Ari. Spirit—obey this sceptre !

Nem. Silent still !
 She is not of our order, but belongs

To the other powers. Mortal ! thy quest
 is vain,

And we are baffled also.

Man. Hear me, hear me—
 Astarte ! my beloved ! speak to me :

I have so much endured—so much
 endure—

Look on me ! the grave hath not
 changed thee more
 Than I am changed for thee. Thou
 lovedst me
 Too much, as I loved thee ; we were not
 made
 To torture thus each other, though it
 were
 The deadliest sin to love as we have
 loved.
 Say that thou loath'st me not—that I do
 bear
 This punishment for both—that thou
 wilt be
 One of the blessed—and that I shall die ;
 For hitherto all hateful things conspire
 To bind me in existence—in a life
 Which makes me shrink from immor-
 tality—
 A future like the past. I cannot rest.
 I know not what I ask, nor what I seek ;
 I feel but what thou art, and what I am ;
 And I would hear yet once before I perish
 The voice which was my music—Speak
 to me !
 For I have call'd on thee in the still
 night,
 Startled the slumbering birds from the
 hush'd boughs,
 And woke the mountain wolves, and
 made the caves
 Acquainted with thy vainly echoed
 name,
 Which answer'd me — many things
 answer'd me—
 Spirits and men—but thou wert silent
 all.
 Yet speak to me ! I have outwatch'd
 the stars,
 And gazed o'er heaven in vain search of
 thee.
 Speak to me ! I have wander'd o'er the
 earth,
 And never found thy likeness—Speak to
 me !
 Look on the fiends around—they feel for
 me :
 I fear them not, and feel for thee alone—
 Speak to me ! though it be in wrath ; —
 but say—
 I reck not what — but let me hear thee
 once—
 This once—once more !
Phantom of Astarte. Manfred.
Man. Say on, say on—
 I live but in the sound—it is thy voice !
Phan. Manfred ! To-morrow ends
 thine earthly ills.
 Farewell !

Man. Yet one word more—am I for-
 given ?
Phan. Farewell !
Man. Say, shall we meet again ?
Phan. Farewell !
Man. One word for mercy ! Say, thou
 lovest me.
Phan. Manfred !
[The Spirit of ASTARTE disappears.]
Nem. She's gone, and will not be
 recall'd ;
 Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to
 the earth.
A Spirit. He is convulsed.—This is to
 be a mortal
 And seek the things beyond mortality.
Another Spirit. Yet, see, he mas-
 tereth himself, and makes
 His torture tributary to his will.
 Had he been one of us, he would have
 made
 An awful spirit.
Nem. Hast thou further question
 Of our great sovereign, or his worship-
 pers ?
Man. None.
Nem. Then for a time farewell.
Man. We meet then ! where ? On the
 earth ?—
 Even as thou wilt : and for the grace ac-
 corded
 I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well !
[Exit MANFRED.]

(Scene closes.)

ACT III

SCENE I.—*A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.*

MANFRED and HERMAN.

Man. What is the hour ?
Her. It wants but one till sunset,
 And promises a lovely twilight.
Man. Say,
 Are all things so disposed of in the tower
 As I directed ?
Her. All, my lord, are ready :
 Here is the key and casket.
Man. It is well :
 Thou may'st retire. *[Exit HERMAN.]*
Man. (alone). There is a calm upon me—
 Inexplicable stillness ! which till now
 Did not belong to what I knew of life.
 If that I did not know philosophy
 To be of all our vanities the motliest,
 The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
 From out the schoolman's jargon, I
 should deem

The golden secret, the sought "Kalon,"
 found,
 And seated in my soul. It will not last,
 But it is well to have known it, though
 but once :
 It hath enlarged my thoughts with a
 new sense,
 And I within my tablets would note
 down
 That there is such a feeling. Who is
 there ?

Re-enter HERMAN.

Her. My lord, the abbot of St. Maurice craves
 To greet your presence.

Enter the ABBOT OF ST. MAURICE.

Abbot. Peace be with Count Manfred !

Man. Thanks, holy father ! welcome to these walls ;
 Thy presence honors them, and blesseth those
 Who dwell within them.

Abbot. Would it were so, Count !—
 But I would fain confer with thee alone.

Man. Herman, retire.—What would my reverend guest ?

Abbot. Thus, without prelude :—Age and zeal, my office,
 And good intent, must plead my privilege ;

Our near, though not acquainted neighborhood,
 May also be my herald. Rumors strange,

And of unholy nature, are abroad,
 And busy with thy name ; a noble name
 For centuries : may he who bears it now
 Transmit it unimpaired !

Man. Proceed,—I listen.

Abbot. 'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
 Which are forbidden to the search of man ;
 That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
 The many evil and unheavenly spirits
 Which walk the valley of the shade of death,
 Thou communest. I know that with mankind,
 Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
 Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
 Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

Man. And what are they who do avouch these things ?

Abbot. My pious brethren—the scared peasantry—
 Even thy own vassals—who do look on thee
 With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril.

Man. Take it.

Abbot. I come to save, and not destroy :
 I would not pry into thy secret soul ;
 But if these things be sooth, there still is time

For penitence and pity : reconcile thee
 With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

Man. I hear thee. This is my reply :
 whate'er

I may have been, or am, doth rest between

Heaven and myself. I shall not choose a mortal

To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd
 Against your ordinances ? prove and punish !

Abbot. My son ! I did not speak of punishment,

But penitence and pardon ;—with myself
 The choice of such remains—and for the last,

Our institutions and our strong belief
 Have given me power to smoothe the path from sin

To higher hope and better thoughts ; the first

I leave to heaven,—“ Vengeance is mine alone ! ”

So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness

His servant echoes back the awful word.

Man. Old man ! there is no power in holy men,

Nor charm in prayer, nor purifying form
 Of penitence, nor outward look, nor fast,
 Nor agony—nor, greater than all these,
 The innate tortures of that deep despair,
 Which is remorse without the fear of hell,

But all in all sufficient to itself
 Would make a hell of heaven—can exorcise

From out the unbound spirit the quick sense

Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge

Upon itself ; there is no future pang
 Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd

He deals on his own soul.

Abbot. All this is well ;
For this will pass away, and be succeeded
By an auspicious hope, which shall look
up
With calm assurance to that blessed
place,
Which all who seek may win, whatever
be
Their earthly errors, so they be atoned :
And the commencement of atonement is
The sense of its necessity. Say on—
And all our church can teach thee shall
be taught ;

And all we can absolve thee shall be
pardon'd.

Man. When Rome's sixth emperor
was near his last,

The victim of a self-inflicted wound,
To shun the torments of a public death
From senates once his slaves, a certain
soldier,

With show of loyal pity, would have
stanch'd

The gushing throat with his officious
robe ;

The dying Roman thrust him back, and
said—

Some empire still in his expiring glance—
“It is too late—is this fidelity?”

Abbot. And what of this?

Man. I answer with the Roman—
“It is too late!”

Abbot. It never can be so,
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
And thy own soul with heaven. Hast
thou no hope?

’Tis strange—even those who do de-
spair above,

Yet shape themselves some fantasy on
earth,

To which frail twig they cling, like
drowning men.

Man. Ay—father! I have had those
earthly visions,

And noble aspirations in my youth,
To make my own the mind of other
men,

The enlightener of nations ; and to rise
I knew not whither—it might be to fall ;
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,
Which having leapt from its more daz-
zling height,

Even in the foaming strength of its
abyss,

(Which casts up misty columns that be-
come

Clouds skimming from the re-ascended
skies,)

Lies low but mighty still.—But this is
past,

My thoughts mistook themselves.

Abbot. And wherefore so?

Man. I could not tame my nature
down ; for he

Must serve who fain would sway ; and
soothe, and sue,

And watch all time, and pry into all
place,

And be a living lie, who would become
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and
such

The mass are ; I disdain'd to mingle with
A herd, though to be leader—and of
wolves.

The lion is alone, and so am I.

Abbot. And why not live and act with
other men?

Man. Because my nature was averse
from life ;

And yet not cruel ; for I would not make,
But find a desolation. Like the wind,

The red-hot breath of the most lone
simoom,

Which dwells but in the desert, and
sweeps o'er

The barren sands which bear no shrubs
to blast,

And revels o'er their wild and arid
waves,

And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly,—such hath
been

The course of my existence ; but there
came

Things in my path which are no more.

Abbot. Alas !
I ’gin to fear that thou art past all aid.

From me and from my calling ; yet so
young,

I still would—

Man. Look on me ! there is an order
Of mortals on the earth, who do become

Old in their youth, and die ere middle
age,

Without the violence of warlike death ;
Some perishing of pleasure, some of
study,

Some worn with toil, some of mere
weariness,

Some of disease, and some insanity,
And some of wither'd or of broken
hearts ;

For this last is a malady which slays
More than are number'd in the lists of
Fate,

Taking all shapes, and bearing many
names.

Look upon me! for even of all these things

Have I partaken; and of all these things,
One were enough; then wonder not that I
Am what I am, but that I ever was,
Or having been, that I am still on earth.

Abbot. Yet, hear me still—

Man. Old man! I do respect
Thine order, and revere thine years; I
deem

Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain:
Think me not churlish; I would spare
thyself,

Far more than me, in shunning at this
time

All further colloquy—and so—farewell.

[*Exit* MANFRED.]

Abbot. This should have been a noble
creature; he

Hath all the energy which would have
made

A goodly frame of glorious elements,
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
It is an awful chaos—light and darkness,
And mind and dust, and passions and
pure thoughts

Mix'd, and contending without end or
order,—

All dormant or destructive: he will
perish,

And yet he must not; I will try once
more

For such are worth redemption; and my
duty

Is to dare all things for a righteous end.
I'll follow him—but cautiously, though
surely. [*Exit* ABBOT.]

SCENE II

Another Chamber.

MANFRED and HERMAN.

Her. My lord, you bade me wait on
you at sunset:

He sinks behind the mountain.

Man. Doth he so?

I will look on him. [*MANFRED advances
to the Window of the Hall.*

Glorious Orb! the idol

Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did
draw down

The erring spirits who can ne'er return.—
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship,
ere

The mystery of thy making was re-
veal'd!

Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain
tops, the hearts

Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they
pour'd

Themselves in orisons! Thou material
God!

And representative of the unknown—
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou
chief star!

Centre of many stars! which mak'st our
earth

Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy
rays!

Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the
climes,

And those who dwell in them! for near
or far,

Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee
Even as our outward aspects;—thou dost
rise,

And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee
well!

I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first
glance

Of love and wonder was for thee, then
take [one

My latest look: thou wilt not beam on
To whom the gifts of life and warmth
have been

Of a more fatal nature. He is gone:
I follow. [*Exit* MANFRED.]

SCENE III

*The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred
at some distance—A Terrace before a
Tower—Time, Twilight.*

HERMAN, MANUEL and other Dependents
of MANFRED.

Her. 'Tis strange enough; night after
night, for years,

He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
Without a witness. I have been within
it,—

So have we all been oft-times; but from it,
Or its contents, it were impossible

To draw conclusions absolute, of aught
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
One chamber where none enter: I would
give

The fee of what I have to come these
three years,

To pore upon its mysteries.

Manuel. 'Twere dangerous;
Content thyself with what thou know'st
already.

Her. Ah! Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,
And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt
within the castle—
How many years is't?

Manuel. Ere Count Manfred's birth,
I served his father, whom he nought re-
sembles.

Her. There be more sons in like pre-
dicament.
But wherein do they differ?

Manuel. I speak not
Of features or of form, but mind, and
habits;
Count Sigismund was proud, but gay and
free,—

A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not
With books and solitude, nor made the
night

A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
Merrier than day; he did not walk the
rocks

And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
From men and their delights.

Her. Beshrew the hour,
But those were jocund times! I would
that such
Would visit the old walls again; they
look

As if they had forgotten them.

Manuel. These walls
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I
have seen

Some strange things in them, Herman.

Her. Come, be friendly;
Relate me some to while away our
watch:

I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this
same tower.

Manuel. That was a night indeed! I
do remember

'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and
such

Another evening;—yon red cloud, which
rests

On Eiger's pinnacle, so rested then,—
So like that it might be the same; the
wind

Was faint and gusty, and the mountain
snows

Began to glitter with the climbing moon;
Count Manfred was, as now, within his
tower,—

How occupied, we knew not, but with
him

The sole companion of his wanderings
And watchings—her, whom of all earthly
things

That lived, the only thing he seem'd to
love,—

As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do
The lady Astarte, his—

Hush! who comes here?

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. Where is your master?

Her. Yonder in the tower.

Abbot. I must speak with him.

Manuel. 'Tis impossible;
He is most private, and must not be thus
Intruded on.

Abbot. Upon myself I take
The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—
But I must see him.

Her. Thou hast seen him once
This eve already.

Abbot. Herman! I command thee,
Knock, and apprise the Count of my ap-
proach.

Her. We dare not.

Abbot. Then it seems I must be herald
Of my own purpose.

Manuel. Reverend father, stop—
I pray you pause.

Abbot. Why so?

Manuel. But step this way,
And I will tell you further. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV

Interior of the Tower.

MANFRED *alone.*

The stars are forth, the moon above the
tops

Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beau-
tiful!

I linger yet with Nature, for the Night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry
shade

Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learn'd the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering,—upon such a
night

I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken
arches

Waved dark in the blue midnight, and
the stars

Shone through the rents of ruin; from
afar

The watch-dog bay'd beyond the Tiber;
and

More near from out the Cæsars' palace
came

The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.

Some cypresses beyond the time-worn
breach

Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they
stood

Within a bowshot. Where the Cæsars
dwelt,

And dwell the tuneless birds of night,
amidst

A grove which springs through levell'd
battlements,

And twines its roots with the imperial
hearths,

Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,

A noble wreck in ruinous perfection,
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Au-

gustan halls,

Gravel on earth in indistinct decay.

And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon,
upon

All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity

Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;

Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the

place

Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old, —

The dead but sceptred sovereigns, who
still rule

Our spirits from their urns.

'Twas such a night!
'T is strange that I recall it at this time;

But I have found our thoughts take
wildest flight

Even at the moment when they should
array

Themselves in pensive order.

Enter the ABBOT.

Abbot. My good-lord!
I crave a second grace for this approach;

But yet let not my humble zeal offend

By its abruptness — all it hath of ill

Recoils on me; its good in the effect

May light upon your head — could I say
heart —

Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers,
I should

Recall a noble spirit which hath wan-
der'd;

But is not yet all lost.

Man. Thou know'st me not;

My days are number'd, and my deeds re-
corded:

Retire, or 'twill be dangerous—Away!

Abbot. Thou dost not mean to menace
me?

Man. Not I;
I simply tell thee peril is at hand,

And would preserve thee.

Abbot. What dost thou mean?

Man. Look there!

What dost thou see?

Abbot. Nothing.

Man. Look there I say.

And steadfastly;—now tell me what
thou seest?

Abbot. That which should shake me,
but I fear it not:

I see a dusk and awful figure rise,
Like an infernal god, from out the earth;

His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form
Robed as with angry clouds: he stands be-

tween

Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.

Man. Thou hast no cause—he shall not
harm thee—but

His sight may shock thine old limbs into
palsy.

I say to thee—Retire!

Abbot. And I reply—
Never—till I have battled with this

fiend:—

What doth he here?

Man. Why—ay—what doth he here?
I did not send for him,—he is unbidden.

Abbot. Alas! lost mortal! what with
guests like these

Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake:
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on

him?

Ah! he unveils his aspect: on his brow
The thunder-scars are graven: from his

eye

Glares forth the immortality of hell—

Avant!—

Man. Pronounce—what is thy mission?

Spirit. Come!—

Abbot. What art thou, unknown being?
answer!—speak!

Spirit. The genius of this mortal.—
Come! 'tis time.

Man. I am prepared for all things, but
deny

The power which summons me. Who sent
thee here?

Spirit. Thou'lt know anon—Come!
Come!

Man. I have commanded
Things of an essence greater far than

thine,

And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!

Spirit. Mortal! thine hour is come—
Away! I say.

Man. I knew, and know my hour is come, but not

To render up my soul to such as thee:

Away! I'll die as I have lived—alone.

Spirit. Then I must summon up my brethren.—Rise!

[*Other Spirits rise up.*]

Abbot. Avaunt! ye evil ones!—
Avaunt! I say;

Ye have no power where piety hath power,

And I do charge ye in the name—

Spirit. Old man!

We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order;

Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,

It were in vain: this man is forfeited.

Once more I summon him—Away!

Away!

Man. I do defy ye,—though I feel my soul

Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;

Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath

To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength

To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take

Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

Spirit. Reluctant mortal!

Is this the Magian who would so pervade

The world invisible, and make himself

Almost our equal? Can it be that thou

Art thus in love with life? the very life Which made thee wretched!

Man. Thou false fiend, thou liest!

My life is in its last hour,—that I know,
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour;

I do not combat against death, but thee
And thy surrounding angels; my past

power,

Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,

But by superior science—penance, daring,

And length of watching, strength of mind, and skill

In knowledge of our fathers—when the earth

Saw men and spirits walking side by side,

And gave ye no supremacy: I stand

Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—
Spurn back, and scorn ye!

Spirit.

But thy many crimes

Have made thee—

Man. What are they to such as thee? Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,

[*hell!*]

And greater criminals?—Back to thy Thou hast no power upon me, that I

feel;

[*know:*]

Thou never shalt possess me, that I What I have done is done; I bear within

A torture which could nothing gain from thine:

The mind which is immortal makes itself Requit for its good or evil thoughts,—

Is its own origin of ill and end

And its own place and time: its innate sense,

When stripp'd of this mortality, derives No color from the fleeting things with-

out,

But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own

desert.

Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;

I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—

But was my own destroyer and will be My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled

fiends!—

The hand of death is on me—but not yours! [*The Demons disappear.*]

Abbot. Alas! how pale thou art—thy lips are white—

And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasping throat

The accents rattle: Give thy prayers to heaven—

Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die not thus.

Man. 'Tis over—my dull eyes can fix thee not;

But all things swim around me, and the earth

Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well!

Give me thy hand.

Abbot. Cold—cold—even to the heart—

But yet one prayer—Alas! how fares it with thee?

Man. Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die. [*MANFRED expires.*]

Abbot. He's gone—his soul hath ta'en its earthless flight;

Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone.

September, 1816—May, 1817. June 16, 1817.

TO THOMAS MOORE

My boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea ;
But, before I go, Tom Moore,
Here's a double health to thee !

Here's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate ;
And, whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the ocean roar around me,
Yet it still shall bear me on ;
Though a desert should surround me,
It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,
As I gasp'd upon the brink,
Ere my fainting spirit fell,
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,
The libation I would pour
Should be—peace with thine and mine,
And a health to thee, Tom Moore.
July, 1817. 1821.

FROM CHILDE HAROLD.

CANTO IV

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of
Sighs ; [Stanza 1
A palace and a prison on each hand :
I saw from out the wave her structures
rise

As from the stroke of the enchanter's
wand :

A thousand years their cloudy wings
expand

Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a sub-
ject land

Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on
her hundred isles !

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers ;
And such she was ;—her daughters had
their dowers

From spoils of nations, and the exhaust-
less East

Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling
showers.

In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their
dignity increased.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier ;
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the
ear :

Those days are gone—but Beauty still is
here.

States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth
not die.

Nor yet forget how Venice once was
dear,

The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of
Italy !

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms
despond

Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway :
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto ; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn
away—

The keystones of the arch ! though all
were o'er,

For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The beings of the mind are not of clay ;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence : that which
Fate

Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits sup-
plied,

First exiles, then replaces what we hate ;
Watering the heart whose early flowers
have died,

And with a fresher growth replenishing
the void.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of
war, [St. 16

Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,
Her voice their only ransom from afar :
See ! as they chant the tragic hymn, the
car

Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the
reins

Fall from his hands, his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt—he rends his cap-
tive's chains,

And bids him thank the bard for free-
dom and his strains.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were
thine,

Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,
 Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,
 Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the
 knot
 Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy
 lot
 Is shameful to the nations,—most of all,
 Albion! to thee: the Ocean queen
 should not
 Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall
 Of Venice think of thine, despite thy
 watery wall.

I loved her from my boyhood; she to me
 Was as a fairy city of the heart,
 Rising like water-columns from the sea,
 Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the
 mart;
 And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shake-
 speare's art,
 Had stamp'd her image in me, and even
 so,
 Although I found her thus, we did not
 part,
 Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
 Than when she was a boast, a marvel
 and a show.

I can repeople with the past—and of
 The present there is still for eye and
 thought,
 And meditation chasten'd down, enough;
 And more, it may be, than I hoped or
 sought;
 And of the happiest moments which
 were wrought
 Within the web of my existence, some
 From thee, fair Venice! have their
 colors caught:
 There are some feelings Time cannot
 benumb,
 Nor Torture shake, or mine would now
 be cold and dumb.

But my soul wanders; I demand it back
 To meditate amongst decay, and
 stand [St. 25
 A ruin amidst ruins; there to track
 Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a
 land
 Which *was* the mightiest in its old com-
 mand,
 And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
 The master-mould of Nature's heavenly
 hand;
 Wherein were cast the heroic and the
 free,
 The beautiful, the brave, the lords of
 earth and sea,

The commonwealth of kings, the men of
 Rome!
 And even since, and now, fair Italy!
 Thou art the garden of the world, the
 home
 Of all Art yields, and Nature can de-
 cree;
 Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?
 Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
 More rich than other climes' fertility;
 Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
 With an immaculate charm which can-
 not be defaced.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night;
 Sunset divides the sky with her; a sea
 Of glory streams along the Alpine
 height
 Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is
 free
 From clouds, but of all colors seems to
 be,—
 Melted to one vast Iris of the West,—
 Where the Day joins the past Eternity,
 While, on the other hand, meek Dian's
 crest
 Floats through the azure air—an island
 of the blest!

A single star is at her side, and reigns
 With her o'er half the lovely heaven;
 but still
 Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and re-
 mains
 Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rætian
 hill,
 As Day and Night contending were,
 until
 Nature reclaim'd her order:—gently
 flows
 The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues
 instil
 The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
 Which streams upon her stream, and
 glass'd within it glows,

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which,
 from afar,
 Comes down upon the waters; all its
 hues,
 From the rich sunset to the rising star,
 Their magical variety diffuse:
 And now they change; a paler shadow
 strews
 Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting
 day
 Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang
 imbues
 With a new color as it gasps away,

The last still loveliest,—till—'t is gone
—and all is gray.

Italia! oh Italia! thou who hast [St. 42
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and
past,

On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd
by shame,
And annals graved in characters of
flame.

Oh, God! that thou wert in thy naked-
ness

Less lovely or more powerful, and
couldst claim

Thy right, and awe the robbers back,
who press

To shed thy blood, and drink the tears
of thy distress;

Then might'st thou more appal; or, less
desired,

Be homely and be peaceful, undeplord
For thy destructive charms; then, still
untired,

Would not be seen the armed torrents
pour'd

Down the deep Alps; nor would the
hostile horde

Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's
sword

Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of
friend or foe.

Yet, Italy! through every other
land [St. 47

Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from
side to side;

Mother of Arts! as once of arms; thy
hand

Was then our guardian, and is still our
guide;

Parent of our religion! whom the wide
Nations have knelt to for the keys of
heaven!

Europe, repentant of her parricide,
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward
driven,

Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be
forgiven.

Oh Rome! my country! city of the
soul [St. 78

The orphans of the heart must turn to
thee, [trol

Lone mother of dead empires! and con-

In their shut breast their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance!
Come and see

The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your
way

O'er steps of broken thrones and tem-
ples, Ye!

Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our
clay.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless
woe;

An empty urn within her wither'd
hands,

Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now,
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilder-
ness?

Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle
her distress.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War,
Flood, and Fire,

Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's
pride;

She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs
ride,

Where the car climb'd the Capitol; far
and wide

Temple and tower went down, nor left a
site:

Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar
light,

And say, "here was, or is," where all is
doubly night?

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
And Freedom find no champion and no
child

Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and un-
defiled?

Or must such minds be nourish'd in the
wild,

Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the
roar

Of cataracts, where nursing Nature
smiled

On infant Washington? Has Earth no
more

Such seeds within her breast, or Europe
no such shore?

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high
place [St. 112]

Where Rome embraced her heroes?
where the steep

Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,
The promontory whence the Traitor's
Leap

Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors
heap

Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field
below,

A thousand years of silenced factions
sleep—

The Forum, where the immortal accents
glow,

And still the eloquent air breathes—
burns with Cicero!

Arches on arches! as it were that Rome,
Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
Would build up all her triumphs in one
dome,

Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams
shine

As 'twere its natural torches, for divine
Should be the light which streams here
to illumine

This long-explored but still exhaustless
mine

Of contemplation, and the azure gloom
Of an Italian night, where the deep skies
assume

Hues which have words, and speak to ye
of heaven,

Floats o'er this vast and wondrous
monument,

And shadows forth its glory. There is
given

Unto the things of earth, which Time
hath bent,

A spirit's feeling, and where he hath
leant

His hand, but broke his scythe, there is
a power

And magic in the ruin'd battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages
are its dower.

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd ap-
plause,

As man was slaughter'd by his fellow-
man.

And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore,
but because

Such were the bloody Circus' genial
laws,

And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore
not?

What matters where we fall to fill the
maws

Of worms—on battle-plains or listed
spot?

Both are but theatres where the chief
actors rot.

I see before me the Gladiator lie [St. 140]
He leans upon his hand—his manly
brow

Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually
low—

And through his side the last drops,
ebbing slow

From the red gash, fall heavy, one by
one,

Like the first of a thunder-shower; and
now

The arena swims around him—he is
gone,

Ere ceased the inhuman shout which
hail'd the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far
away;

He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube
lay,

There were his young barbarians all at
play,

There was their Dacian mother—he,
their sire,

Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he
expire

And unavenged? Arise! ye Goths, and
glut your ire!

But here, where Murder breathed her
bloody steam;

And here, where buzzing nations choked
the ways,

And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain
stream

Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here, where the Roman million's blame
or praise

Was death or life, the playthings of a
crowd,

My voice sounds much—and fall the
stars' faint rays

On the arena void—seats crush'd, walls
bow'd—

And galleries, where my steps seem
echoes strangely loud.

A ruin—yet what ruin ! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been
rear'd ;

Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have
appear'd.

Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but
clear'd ?

Alas ! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd :
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years,
man, have reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to
climb

Its topmost arch, and gently pauses
there ;

When the stars twinkle through the
loops of time,

And the low night-breeze waves along
the air

The garland-forest, which the gray walls
wear,

Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's
head ;

When the light shines serene but doth
not glare,

Then in this magic circle raise the dead :
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their
dust ye tread.

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
The being who upheld it through the
past ? [St. 164

Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
He is no more—these breathings are his
last ;

His wanderings done, his visions ebbing
fast

And he himself as nothing :—if he was
Aught but a phantasy, and could be
class'd

With forms which live and suffer—let
that pass—

His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

Which gathers shadow, substance, life,
and all

That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
And spreads the dim and universal pall

Through which all things grow phan-
toms ; and the cloud

Between us sinks, and all which ever
glow'd,

Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
A melancholy halo scarce allow'd

To hover on the verge of darkness ; rays

Sadder than saddest night, for they dis-
tract the gaze,

And send us prying into the abyss,
To gather what we shall be when the
frame

Shall be resolved to something less than
this

Its wretched essence ; and to dream of
fame.

And wipe the dust from off the idle name
We never more shall hear,—but never
more,

Oh, happier thought ! can we be made
the same :

It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
These fardels of the heart—the heart
whose sweat was gore.

But I forget.—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part,—so let it be—
His task and mine alike are nearly done ;
Yet once more let us look upon the sea :
The midland ocean breaks on him and
me ;

And from the Alban Mount we now be-
hold

Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which
when we

Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we follow'd on till the
dark Euxine roll'd

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—
Long, though not very many—since
have done [St. 176

Their work on both ; some suffering
and some tears

Have left us nearly where we had begun :
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run ;

We have had our reward, and it is here.—
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,

And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as
dear

As if there were no man to trouble what
is clear.

Oh ! that the Desert were my dwelling-
place,

With one fair Spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,

And, hating no one, love but only her !
Ye elements !—if whose ennobling sti

I feel myself exalted—Can ye not
Accord me such a being ! Do I err

In deeming such inhabit many a spot ?
Though with them to converse can rare-
ly be our lot.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
 There is society, where none intrudes,
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar :
 I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
 From these our interviews, in which I
 steal

From all I may be, or have been before,
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot
 all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean
 —roll !

Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in
 vain ;

Man marks the earth with ruin—his
 control

Stops with the shore ; upon the watery
 plain

The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth
 remain

A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
 When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
 He sinks into thy depths with bubbling
 groan,

Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd,
 and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths—thy
 fields

Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
 And shake him from thee ; the vile
 strength he wields

For earth's destruction thou dost all de-
 spise,

Spurning him from thy bosom to the
 skies,

And send'st him, shivering in thy play-
 ful spray

And howling, to his Gods, where haply
 lies

His petty home in some near port or bay
 And dashest him again to earth :—there
 let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the
 walls,

Of rock-built cities, bidding nations
 quake,

And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
 The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs
 make

Their clay creator the vain title take
 Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—

These are thy toys, and, as the snowy
 flake,

They melt into thy yeast of waves,
 which mar

Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of
 Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all
 save thee—

Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what
 are they ?

Thy waters wash'd them power while
 they were free,

And many a tyrant since ; their shores
 obey

The stranger, slave, or savage ; their de-
 cay

Has dried up realms to deserts : not so
 thou ;—

Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves'
 play,

Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure
 brow :

Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou
 rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Al-
 mighty's form

Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time,—
 Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale,

or storm,

Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
 Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and

sublime,

The image of eternity, the throne
 Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime

The monsters of the deep are made ;
 each zone

Obeys thee ; thou goest forth, dread,
 fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean ! and my
 joy

Of youthful sports was on thy breast to
 be

Borne, like thy bubbles, onward ; from
 a boy

I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to
 me

Were a delight ; and if the freshening sea
 Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing

fear,

For I was as it were a child of thee,
 And trusted to thy billows far and near,

And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I
 do here.

My task is done, my song hath ceased,
 my theme

Has died into an echo ; it is fit
 The spell should break of this protracted

dream.

The torch shall be extinguish'd which
hath lit
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is
writ ;
Would it were worthier ! but I am not
now
That which I have been—and my visions
flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering,
faint, and low.

Farewell ! a word that must be, and hath
been—
A sound which makes us linger ;—yet—
farewell !
Ye ! who have traced the Pilgrim to the
scene
Which is his last, if in your memories
dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye
swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-
shell ;
Farewell ! with *him* alone may rest the
pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral
of his strain.

June 26—July 20, 1817. 1818.

DON JUAN

DEDICATION

BOB SOUTHEY ! You're a poet—Poet-
laureate,
And representative of all the race ;
Although 't is true that you turn'd out a
Tory at
Last,—yours has lately been a com-
mon case ;
And now, my Epic Renegade ! what are
ye at ?
With all the Lakers, in and out of
place ?
A nest of tuneful persons, to my eye
Like "four and twenty Blackbirds in a
pye ;
" Which pye being open'd they began to
sing"
(This old song and new simile holds
good).
"A dainty dish to set before the King,"
Or Regent, who admires such kind of
food ;—
And Coleridge, too, has lately taken
wing,

But like a hawk encumber'd with his
hood,—
Explaining metaphysics to the nation—
I wish he would explain his Explanation.

You, Bob ! are rather insolent, you
know,
At being disappointed in your wish
To supersede all warblers here below.
And be the only Blackbird in the dish ;
And then you overstrain yourself, or so,
And tumble downward like the flying
fish
Gasping on deck, because you soar too
high, Bob,
And fall for lack of moisture quite
a-dry, Bob !

And Wordsworth, in a rather long "Ex-
cursion"
(I think the quarto holds five hundred
pages),
Has given a sample from the vasty ver-
sion
Of his new system to perplex the
sages ;
'T is poetry—at least by his assertion,
And may appear so when the dog-star
rages—
And he who understands it would be able
To add a story to the Tower of Babel.

You—Gentlemen ! by dint of long seclu-
sion
From better company, have kept your
own
At Keswick, and through still continued
fusion
Of one another's minds, at last have
grown
To deem as a most logical conclusion,
That poesy has wreaths for you alone ;
There is a narrowness in such a notion,
Which makes me wish you'd change
your lakes for ocean.

I would not imitate the petty thought,
Nor coin my self-love to so base a vice,
For all the glory your conversion
brought,
Since gold alone should not have been
its price,
You have your salary ; was 't for that
you wrought ?
And Wordsworth has his place in the
Excise.
You're shabby fellows—true—but poets
still,
And duly seated on the immortal hill.

Your bays may hide the baldness of your brows—

Perhaps some virtuous blushes;—let them go—

To you I envy neither fruit nor boughs—
And for the fame you would engross below,

The field is universal, and allows
Scope to all such as feel the inherent glow;

Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore and Crabbe will try

'Gainst you the question with posterity.

For me, who, wandering with pedestrian Muses,

Contend not with you on the winged steed,

I wish your fate may yield ye, when she chooses,

The fame you envy, and the skill you need;

And recollect a poet nothing loses
In giving to his brethren their full meed

Of merit, and complaint of present days
Is not the certain path to future praise.

He that reserves his laurels for posterity
(Who does not often claim the bright reversion)

Has generally no great crop to spare it,
he

Being only injured by his own assertion;

And although here and there some glorious rarity

Arise like Titan from the sea's immersion,

The major part of such appellants go
To—God knows where—for no one else can know.

If, fallen in evil days on evil tongues,
Milton appealed to the Avenger, Time,

If Time, the Avenger, execrates his wrongs,

And makes the word "Miltonic" mean
"sublime,"

He deign'd not to belie his soul in songs,
Nor turn his very talent to a crime;

He did not loathe the Sire to laud the Son,

But closed the tyrant-hater he begun.

Think'st thou, could he—the blind Old Man,—arise,

Like Samuel from the grave, to freeze
once more

The blood of monarchs with his prophecies.

Or be alive again—again all hoar
With time and trials, and those helpless eyes,

And heartless daughters—worn—and pale—and poor;

Would *he* adore a sultan? *he* obey
The intellectual eunuch Castlereagh?

Cold-blooded, smooth-faced, placid miscreant!

Dabbling its sleek young hands in Erin's gore

And thus for wider carnage taught to pant,

Transferr'd to gorge upon a sister shore,

The vulgarlest tool that Tyranny could want,

With just enough of talent, and no more,

To lengthen fetters by another fix'd,
And offer poison long already mix'd.

An orator of such set trash of phrase

Ineffably—legitimately vile,

That even its grossest flatterers dare not praise,

Nor foes—all nations—condescend to smile;

Not even a sprightly blunder's spark can blaze

From that Ixion grindstone's ceaseless toil,

That turns and turns to give the world a notion

Of endless torments and perpetual motion.

A bungler even in its disgusting trade,
And botching, patching, leaving still behind

Something of which its masters are afraid,

States to be curb'd, and thoughts to be confined,

Conspiracy or Congress to be made—
Cobbling at manacles for all mankind—

A tinkering slave-maker, who mends
old chains,

With God and man's abhorrence for its gains.

If we may judge of matter by the mind,
Emasculated to the marrow *It*

Hath but two objects, how to serve, and bind.

Deeming the chain it wears even men
may fit,
Eutropius of its many masters—blind
To worth as freedom, wisdom as to wit,
Fearless—because *no* feeling dwells in
ice,
Its very courage stagnates to a vice.

Where shall I turn me not to *view* its
bonds,

For I will never *feel* them ;—Italy !
Thy late reviving Roman soul desponds
Beneath the lie this State-thing
breathed o'er thee—
Thy clanking chain, and Erin's yet green
wounds,

Have voices—tongues to cry aloud for
me.

Europe has slaves, allies, kings, armies
still,
And Southey lives to sing them very ill.

Meantime, Sir Laureate, I proceed to ded-
icate,

In honest simple verse, this song to
you.

And, if in flattering strains I do not pred-
icate,

'T is that I still retain my "buff and
blue ;"

My politics as yet are all to educate :

Apostasy's so fashionable, too,
To keep *one* creed's a task grown quite
Herculean :

Is it not so, my Tory, Ultra-Julian ?
September, 1818. July 15, 1819.

FROM CANTO I

W.

POETICAL COMMANDMENTS

If ever I should condescend to prose,
I'll write poetical commandments,
which [St. 204]

Shall supersede beyond all doubt all
those

That went before ; in these I shall en-
rich

My text with many things that no one
knows,

And carry precept to the highest pitch :
I'll call the work "Longinus o'er a Bottle,
Or, Every Poet his *own* Aristotle."

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden,
Pope ;

Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth,
Coleridge, Southey ;

Because the first is crazed beyond all
hope,

The second drunk, the third so quaint
and mouthy :

With Crabbe it may be difficult to cope,
And Campbell's Hippocrene is some-
what drouthy :

Thou shalt not steal from Samuel Rogers,
nor

Commit—flirtation with the muse of
Moore.

Thou shalt not covet Mr. Sotheby's
Muse,

His Pegasus, nor anything that's his ;
Thou shalt not bear false witness like
"the Blues"—

(There's one, at least, is very fond of
this) :

Thou shalt not write, in short, but what
I choose ;

This is true criticism, and you may
kiss—

Exactly as you please, or not—the rod ;
But if you don't, I'll lay it on, by G—d !

LABUNTUR ANNI

"*Non ego hoc ferrem calidus juventâ
Consule Plânco,*" Horace said, and so
Say I ; by which quotation there is
meant a [St. 212]

Hint that some six or seven good years
ago

(Long ere I dreamt of dating from the
Brenta)

I was most ready to return a blow,
And would not brook at all this sort of
thing

In my hot youth—when George the
Third was King.

But now at thirty years my hair is gray—
(I wonder what it will be like at forty ?
I thought of a peruke the other day—)

My heart is not much greener ; and, in
short, I

Have squander'd my whole summer
while 't was May,

And feel no more the spirit to retort ; I
Have spent my life, both interest and
principal,

And deem not, what I deem'd, my soul
invincible.

No more—no more—Oh ! never more on
me

The freshness of the heart can fall like
dew,

Which out of all the lovely things we see
Extracts emotions beautiful and new,

Hived in our bosoms like the bag o' the
bee.

Think'st thou the honey with those ob-
jects grew ?

Alas ! 't was not in them, but in thy power
To double even the sweetness of a flower.

No more—no more—Oh ! never more, my
heart,

Canst thou be my sole world, my uni-
verse !

Once all in all, but now a thing apart,
Thou canst not be my blessing or my
curse :

The illusion's gone for ever, and thou art
Insensible, I trust, but none the worse,
And in thy stead I've got a deal of
judgment,

Though heaven knows how it ever found
a lodgment.

My days of love are over ; me no more
The charms of maid, wife, and still less
of widow,

Can make the fool of which they made
before,—

In short, I must not lead the life I did
do ;

The credulous hope of mutual minds is
o'er,

The copious use of claret is forbid too,
So for a good old-gentlemanly vice,
I think I must take up with avarice.

Ambition was my idol, which was broken
Before the shrines of Sorrow, and of
Pleasure ;

And the two last have left me many a
token

O'er which reflection may be made at
leisure ;

Now, like Friar Bacon's brazen head,
I've spoken,

" Time is, Time was, Time's past : "—a
chymic treasure

Is glittering youth, which I have spent
betimes—

My heart in passion, and my head on
rhymes.

What is the end of fame ? 't is but to fill
A certain portion of uncertain paper :

Some liken it to climbing up a hill
Whose summit, like all hills, is lost in
vapor ;

For this men write, speak, preach, and
heroes kill,

And bards burn what they call their
" midnight taper,"

To have, when the original is dust.

A name, a wretched picture, and worse
bust.

Canto I. *September, 1818.* July 15, 1819.

W. FROM CANTO II

THE SHIPWRECK

'Twas twilight, and the sunless day
went down [St. 49.

Over the waste of waters ; like a veil,
Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose
the frown

Of one whose hate is mask'd but to assail.
Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was
shown,

And grimly darkled o'er the faces pale,
And the dim desolate deep : twelve days
had Fear

Been their familiar, and now Death was
here.

Some trial had been making at a raft,
With little hope in such a rolling sea,
A sort of thing at which one would have
laugh'd,

If any laughter at such times could be,
Unless with people who too much have
quaff'd,

And have a kind of wild and horrid
glee,

Half epileptical, and half hysterical :—
Their preservation would have been a
miracle.

At half-past eight o'clock, booms, hen-
coops, spars,

And all things, for a chance, had been
cast loose

That still could keep afloat the struggling
tars,

For yet they strove, although of no
great use :

There was no light in heaven but a few
stars,

The boats put off o'ercrowded with
their crews ;

She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port,
And, going down head-foremost—sunk,
in short.

Then rose from sea to sky the wild fare-
well—

Then shriek'd the timid, and stood
still the brave—

Then some leap'd overboard with dread-
ful yell,

As eager to anticipate their grave ;
And the sea yawn'd around her like a
hell.

And down she suck'd with her the
whirling wave,
Like one who grapples with his enemy,
And strives to strangle him before he die.

And first one universal shriek 'there
rush'd,
Louder than the loud ocean, like a
crash
Of echoing thunder; and then all was
hush'd,
Save the wild wind and the remorse-
less dash
Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,
Accompanied with a convulsive splash,
A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.

HAIDEE

How long in his damp trance young
Juan lay [St. 111.
He knew not, for the earth was gone
for him.

And time had nothing more of night
nor day
For his congealing blood, and senses
dim;

And how this heavy faintness pass'd
away
He knew not, till each painful pulse
and limb,
And tingling vein, seem'd throbbing
back to life,
For Death, though vanquish'd, still re-
tired with strife.

His eyes he open'd, shut, again unclosed,
For all was doubt and dizziness; he
thought

He still was in the boat, and had but
dozed,

And felt again with his despair o'er-
wrought,
And wish'd it death in which he had
reposed,

And then once more his feelings back
were brought,
And slowly by his swimming eyes was
seen

A lovely female face of seventeen.

'Twas bending close o'er his, and the
small mouth

Seem'd almost prying into his for
breath;

And chafing him, the soft warm hand
of youth

Recall'd his answering spirits back
from death;
And, bathing his chill temples, tried to
soothe

Each pulse to animation, till beneath
Its gentle touch and trembling care, a
sigh
To these kind efforts made a low reply.

Then was the cordial pour'd, and mantle
flung

Around his scarce-clad limbs; and the
fair arm

Raised higher the faint head which o'er
it hung;

And her transparent cheek, all pure
and warm,

Pillow'd his death-like forehead; then
she wrung

His dewy curls, long drench'd by
every storm;

And watch'd with eagerness each throb
that drew

A sigh from his heaved bosom—and
hers, too.

And lifting him with care into the cave,
The gentle girl, and her attendant,—
one

Young, yet her elder, and of brow less
grave,

And more robust of figure—then begun
To kindle fire, and as the new flames

gave
Light to the rocks that roof'd them,
which the sun

Had never seen, the maid, or whatsoever
She was, appear'd distinct, and tall,

and fair.

Her brow was overhung with coins of
gold,

That sparkled o'er the auburn of her
hair,

Her clustering hair, whose longer locks
were roll'd

In braids behind; and though her
stature were

Even of the highest for a female mould,
They nearly reach'd her heel; and in

her air
There was a something which bespoke

command,
As one who was a lady in the land.

Her hair, I said, was auburn; but her
eyes

Were black as death, their lashes the
same hue,

Of downcast length, in whose silk
shadow lies
Deepest attraction; for when to the
view

Forth from its raven fringe the full
glance flies,

Ne'er with such force the swiftest
arrow flew;

'Tis as the snake late coil'd, who pours
his length,

And hurls at once his venom and his
strength.

Her brow was white and low, her cheek's
pure dye

Like twilight rosy still with the set
sun;

Short upper lip—sweet lips! that make
us sigh

Ever to have seen such; for she was
one

Fit for the model of a statuary
(A race of mere impostors, when all's
done—

I've seen much finer women, ripe and
real,

Than all the nonsense of their stone
ideal).

I'll tell you why I say so, for 't is just
One should not rail without a decent
cause:

There was an Irish lady, to whose bust
I ne'er saw justice done, and yet she
was

A frequent model; and if e'er she must
Yield to stern Time and Nature's
wrinkling laws,

They will destroy a face which mortal
thought

Ne'er compass'd, nor less mortal chisel
wrought.

And such was she, the lady of the cave:
Her dress was very different from the
Spanish,

Simpler, and yet of colors not so grave;
For, as you know, the Spanish women
banish

Bright hues when out of doors, and yet,
while wave

Around them (what I hope will never
vanish)

The basquina and the mantilla, they
Seem at the same time mystical and gay.

But with our damsel this was not the
case:

Her dress was many-color'd, finely
spun;

Her locks curl'd negligently round her
face,

But through them gold and gems pro-
fusely shone:

Her girdle sparkled, and the richest lace
Flow'd in her veil, and many a precious
stone

Flash'd on her little hand; but, what
was shocking,

Her small snow feet had slippers, but no
stocking.

The other female's dress was not unlike,
But of inferior materials: she

Had not so many ornaments to strike,
Her hair had silver only, bound to be

Her dowry; and her veil, in form alike,
Was coarser; and her air, though

firm, less free;
Her hair was thicker, but less long; her
eyes

As black, but quicker, and of smaller
size.

And these two tended him, and cheer'd
him both

With food and raiment, and those soft
attentions,

Which are—(as I must own)—of female
growth,

And have ten thousand delicate inven-
tions:

They made a most superior mess of broth,
A thing which poesy but seldom men-
tions,

But the best dish that e'er was cook'd
since Homer's

Achilles order'd dinner for new comers.

• • • • •
The coast—I think it was the coast that I
Was just describing—Yes, it *was* the
coast— [St. 181

Lay at this period quiet as the sky,
The sands untumbled, the blue waves
untost,

And all was stillness, save the sea-bird's
cry,

And dolphin's leap, and little billow
crost

By some low rock or shelf, that made
it fret

Against the boundary it scarcely wet.

And forth they wander'd, her sire being
gone,

As I have said, upon an expedition;
And mother, brother, guardian, she had
none,

Save Zoe, who, although with due pre-
cision

She waited on her lady with the sun,
 Thought daily service was her only
 mission,
 Bringing warm water, wreathing her
 long tresses,
 And asking now and then for cast-off
 dresses.

It was the cooling hour, just when the
 rounded
 Red sun sinks down behind the azure
 hill,
 Which then seems as if the whole earth
 it bounded,
 Circling all nature, hush'd, and dim,
 and still,
 With the far mountain-crescent half
 surrounded
 On one side, and the deep sea calm
 and chill,
 Upon the other, and the rosy sky,
 With one star sparkling through it like
 an eye.

And thus they wander'd forth, and hand
 in hand,
 Over the shining pebbles and the shells,
 Glided along the smooth and harden'd
 sand,
 And in the worn and wild receptacles
 Work'd by the storms, yet work'd as it
 were plann'd,
 In hollow halls, with sparry roofs and
 cells,
 They turn'd to rest; and, each clasp'd
 by an arm,
 Yielded to the deep twilight's purple
 charm.

They look'd up to the sky, whose float-
 ing glow
 Spread like a rosy ocean, vast and
 bright;
 They gazed upon the glittering sea be-
 low,
 Whence the broad moon rose circling
 into sight;
 They heard the waves splash, and the
 wind so low,
 And saw each other's dark eyes darting
 light
 Into each other—and, beholding this,
 Their lips drew near, and clung into a
 kiss;

A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth, and
 love,
 And beauty, all concentrating like rays
 Into one focus, kindled from above;

Such kisses as belong to early days,
 Where heart, and soul, and sense, in
 concert move,
 And the blood's lava, and the pulse a
 blaze,
 Each kiss a heart-quake,—for a kiss's
 strength,
 I think it must be reckon'd by its length.

By length I mean duration; theirs en-
 dured
 Heaven knows how long—no doubt
 they never reckon'd;
 And if they had, they could not have
 secured
 The sum of their sensations to a second;
 They had not spoken; but they felt al-
 lured,
 As if their souls and lips each other
 beckon'd,
 Which, being join'd, like swarming bees
 they clung—
 Their hearts the flowers from whence
 the honey sprung.

They were alone, but not alone as they
 Who shut in chambers think it lone-
 liness;
 The silent ocean, and the starlight bay,
 The twilight glow, which momentarily
 grew less,
 The voiceless sands, and dropping caves,
 that lay
 Around them, made them to each other
 press,
 As if there were no life beneath the sky
 Save theirs, and that their life could
 never die.

They fear'd no eyes nor ears on that lone
 beach,
 They felt no terrors from the night;
 they were
 All in all to each other; though their
 speech
 Was broken words, they *thought* a
 language there,—
 And all the burning tongues the passions
 teach
 Found in one sigh the best interpreter
 Of nature's oracle—first love,—that all
 Which Eve has left her daughters since
 her fall.

Alas! the love of women! it is known
 To be a lovely and a fearful thing;
 For all of theirs upon that die is thrown,
 And if 't is lost, life hath no more to
 bring

To them but mockeries of the past alone,
 And their revenge is as the tiger's
 spring,
 Deadly, and quick, and crushing; yet,
 as real
 Torture is theirs, what they inflict they
 feel.

They are right; for man, to man so oft
 unjust,
 Is always so to women; one sole bond
 Awaits them, treachery is all their trust;
 Taught to conceal, their bursting
 hearts despond
 Over their idol, till some wealthier lust
 Buys them in marriage—and what
 rests beyond?
 A thankless husband, next a faithless
 lover,
 Then dressing, nursing, praying, and
 all's over.

Some take a lover, some take drams or
 prayers,
 Some mind their household, others
 dissipation,
 Some run away, and but exchange their
 cares,
 Losing the advantage of a virtuous
 station;
 Few changes e'er can better their affairs,
 Theirs being an unnatural situation,
 From the dull palace to the dirty hovel:
 Some play the devil, and then write a
 novel.

Haidée was Nature's bride, and knew
 not this:
 Haidée was Passion's child, born
 where the sun
 Showers triple light, and scorches even
 the kiss
 Of his gazelle-eyed daughters; she was
 one
 Made but to love, to feel that she was
 his
 Who was her chosen: what was said or
 done
 Elsewhere was nothing. She had nought
 to fear,
 Hope, care, nor love beyond,—her heart
 beat *here*.

And oh! that quickening of the heart,
 that beat!
 How much it costs us! yet each rising
 throb
 Is in its cause as its effect so sweet,
 That wisdom, ever on the watch to rob
 Joy of its alchemy, and to repeat

Fine truths; even Conscience, too, has
 a tough job
 To make us understand each good old
 maxim,
 So good—I wonder Castlereagh don't tax
 'em.

And now 't was done—on the lone shore
 were plight'd
 Their hearts; the stars, their nuptial
 torches, shed
 Beauty upon the beautiful they lighted;
 Ocean their witness, and the cave
 their bed,
 By their own feelings hallow'd and
 united,
 Their priest was Solitude, and they
 were wed:
 And they were happy, for to their young
 eyes
 Each was an angel, and earth paradise.

Oh, Love! of whom great Cæsar was the
 suitor,
 Titus the master, Antony the slave,
 Horace, Catullus, scholars, Ovid tutor,
 Sappho the sage blue-stocking, in
 whose grave
 All those may leap who rather would be
 neuter—
 (Leucadia's rock still overlooks the
 wave)—
 Oh, Love! thou art the very god of evil,
 For, after all, we cannot call thee devil.

Thou mak'st the chaste connubial state
 precarious,
 And jestest with the brows of might
 iest men:
 Cæsar and Pompey, Mahomet, Belisarius,
 Have much employ'd the muse of his-
 tory's pen:
 Their lives and fortunes were extremely
 various,
 Such worthies Time will never see
 again;
 Yet to these four in three things the
 same luck holds,
 They all were heroes, conquerors, and
 cuckolds.

Thou mak'st philosophers; there's Epi-
 curus
 And Aristippus, a material crew!
 Who to immoral courses would allure us,
 By theories quite practicable too;
 If only from the devil they would insun,
 us,
 How pleasant were the maxim (not
 quite new),

"Eat, drink, and love; what can the
rest avail us?"
So said the royal sage Sardanapalus.

But Juan! had he quite forgotten Julia?
And should he have forgotten her so
soon?

I can't but say it seems to me most
truly a
Perplexing question; but, no doubt,
the moon

Does these things for us, and whenever
newly a

Strong palpitation rises, 't is her boon,
Else how the devil is it that fresh fea-
tures

Have such a charm for us poor human
creatures?

I hate inconstancy—I loathe, detest,
Abhor, condemn, abjure the mortal
made

Of such quicksilver clay that in his
breast

No permanent foundation can be laid;
Love, constant love, has been my con-
stant guest,

And yet last night, being at a masque-
rade,

I saw the prettiest creature, fresh from
Milan,

Which gave me some sensations like a
villain.

But soon Philosophy came to my aid,
And whisper'd, "Think of every
sacred tie!"

"I will, my dear Philosophy!" I said,
"But then her teeth, and then, oh,
Heaven! her eye!"

I'll just inquire if she be wife or maid,
Or neither—out of curiosity."

"Stop!" cried Philosophy, with air so
Grecian

(Though she was masqued then as a fair
Venetian);

"Stop!" so I stopp'd.—But to return:
that which

Men call inconstancy is nothing more
Than admiration due where nature's
rich

Profusion with young beauty covers
o'er

Some favor'd object; and as in the niche
A lovely statue we almost adore,

This sort of adoration of the real
Is but a heightening of the "beau
ideal."

'T is the perception of the beautiful,
A fine extension of the faculties,
Platonic, universal, wonderful,
Drawn from the stars, and filter'd
through the skies,
Without which life would be extremely
dull;

In short, it is the use of our own eyes,
With one or two small senses added, just
To hint that flesh is form'd of fiery dust.

Yet 't is a painful feeling, and unwilling,
For surely if we always could perceive
In the same object graces quite as kill-
ing

As when she rose upon us like an Eve,
'T would save us many a heart-ache,
many a shilling

(For we must get them anyhow, or
grieve),

Whereas, if one sole lady pleased for-
ever,

How pleasant for the heart, as well as
liver.

The heart is like the sky, a part of
heaven,

But changes night and day, too, like
the sky;

Now o'er it clouds and thunder must be
driven,

And darkness and destruction as on
high:

But when it hath been scorch'd, and
pierced, and riven,

Its storms expire in water-drops; the
eye

Pours forth at last the heart's blood
turn'd to tears,

Which make the English climate of our
years.

The liver is the lazaret of bile,

But very rarely executes its function,
For the first passion stays there such a
while,

That all the rest creep in and form a
junction,

Like knots of vipers on a dunghill's soil,
Rage, fear, hate, jealousy, revenge,
compunction,

So that all mischiefs spring up from this
entrail,

Like earthquakes from the hidden fire
call'd "central."

In the mean time, without proceeding
more

In this anatomy. I've finish'd now

Two hundred and odd stanzas as before,
That being about the number I'll
allow
Each canto of the twelve, or twenty-
four ;
And, laying down my pen, I make my
bow,
Leaving Don Juan and Haidée to plead
For them and theirs with all who deign
to read.

Canto II., *December, 1818, January,*
1819. July 15, 1819.

FROM CANTO III

THE ISLES OF GREECE

The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece !
Where burning Sappho loved and
sung,

Where grew the arts of war and peace,—
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus
sprung !

Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse:
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."

The mountains look on Marathon—
And Marathon looks on the sea ;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dream'd that Greece might still be
free ;

For standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis ;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations ;—all were his !
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set, where were they ?

And where are they ? and where art thou,
My country ? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now—
The heroic bosom beats no more !
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine ?

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face ;
For what is left the poet here ?
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest ?
Must *we* but blush ?—Our fathers bled.
Earth ! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead !
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ !

What, silent still ? and silent all ?
Ah ! no ;—the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer, " Let one living head,
But one arise,—we come, we come !"
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain—in vain : strike other chords ;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine !
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine !
Hark ! rising to the ignoble call—
How answers each bold Bacchanal !

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet ;
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone ?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one ?
You have the letters Cadmus gave—
Think ye he meant them for a slave ?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
We will not think of themes like these !
It made Anacreon's song divine ;
He served—but served Polycrates—
A tyrant ; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest
friend ;
That tyrant was Miltiades !
Oh ! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind !
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore ;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks,
They have a king who buys and sells ;
In native swords and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells :
But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !
Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
I see their glorious black eyes shine ;
But gazing on each glowing maid,

My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

W Thus sung, or would, or could, or should
have sung, St. 87
The modern Greek, in tolerable verse;
If not like Orpheus quite, when Greece
was young,
Yet in these times he might have done
much worse:
His strain display'd some feeling—right
or wrong;
And feeling, in a poet, is the source
Of others' feeling; but they are such
liars,
And take all colors—like the hands of
dyers.

But words are things, and a small drop
of ink,
Falling like dew, upon a thought, pro-
duces
That which makes thousands, perhaps
millions, think;
'Tis strange, the shortest letter which
man uses
Instead of speech, may form a lasting
link
Of ages; to what straits old Time re-
duces
Frail man when paper—even a rag like
this,
Survives himself, his tomb, and all that's
his!

And when his bones are dust, his grave
a blank,
His station, generation, even his na-
tion,
Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank
In chronological commemoration,
Some dull MS. oblivion long has sank,
Or graven stone found in a barrack's
station
In digging the foundation of a closet,
May turn his name up, as a rare deposit.

And glory long has made the sages smile;
'Tis something, nothing, words, il-
lusion wind—
Depending more upon the historian's
style

Than on the name a person leaves
behind:

Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to
Hoyle;

The present century was growing blind
To the great Marlborough's skill in giv-
ing knocks,
Until his late Life by Archdeacon Coxe.

Milton's the prince of poets—so we say;
A little heavy, but no less divine:
An independent being in his day—

Learn'd, pious, temperate in love and
wine;

But his life falling into Johnson's way,
We're told this great high priest of all
the Nine

Was whipt at college—a harsh sire—
odd spouse,

For the first Mrs. Milton left his house.

All these are, *certainly*, entertaining facts,
Like Shakspeare's stealing deer, Lord
Bacon's bribes;

Like Titus' youth, and Cæsar's earliest
acts;

Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well
describes);

Like Cromwell's pranks;—but although
truth exacts

These amiable descriptions from the
scribes,

As most essential to their hero's story,
They do not much contribute to his glory.

All are not moralists, like Southey, when
He prated to the world of "Pantis-
ocracy:"

Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who
then

Season'd his pedlar poems with de-
mocracy;

Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen
Let to the Morning Post its aris-
tocracy;

When he and Southey, following the
same path,

Espoused two partners (milliners of
Bath).

Such names at present cut a convict
figure,

The very Botany Bay in moral geo-
graphy;

Their royal treason, renegado rigor,
Are good manure for their more bare
biography.

Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way,
is bigger

Than any since the birthday of typography;
A drowsy frowzy poem, call'd the "Excursion,"
Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

He there builds up a formidable dyke
Between his own and others' intellect;
But Wordsworth's poem, and his followers, like
Joanna Southcote's Shiloh, and her sect,
Are things which in this century don't strike
The public mind,—so few are the elect;
And the new births of both their stale virginities
Have proved but dropsies, taken for divinities.

But let me to my story: I must own,
If I have any fault, it is digression,
Leaving my people to proceed alone,
While I soliloquize beyond expression:
But these are my addresses from the throne,
Which put off business to the ensuing session:
Forgetting each omission is a loss to
The world, not quite so great as Ariosto.

I know that what our neighbors call
"longueurs,"
(We've not so good a word, but have the thing,
In that complete perfection which insures
An epic from Bob Southey every Spring—)
Form not the true temptation which allures
The reader; but 't would not be hard to bring
Some fine examples of the *épopée*,
To prove its grand ingredient is *ennui*.

We learn from Horace, "Homer sometimes sleeps;"

We feel without him, Wordsworth sometimes wakes,—
To show with what complacency he creeps,
With his dear "Wagoners," around his lakes.
He wishes for "a boat" to sail the deeps—
Of ocean?—No, of air; and then he makes

Another outcry for "a little boat,"
And drivels seas to set it well afloat.

If he must fain sweep o'er the ethereal plain,
And Pegasus runs restive in his "Wagon,"
Could he not beg the loan of Charles's Wain?
Or pray Medea for a single dragon?
Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain,
He fear'd his neck to venture such a nag on,
And he must needs mount nearer to the moon,
Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon?

"Pedlars," and "Boats," and "Wagons!" Oh! ye shades
Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to this?
That trash of such sort not alone evades
Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss
Floats scumlike uppermost, and these Jack Cades
Of sense and song above your graves may hiss—
The "little boatman" and his "Peter Bell"
Can sneer at him who drew "Achitophel!"

T' our tale.—The feast was over, the slaves gone,
The dwarfs and dancing girls had all retired;
The Arab lore and poet's song were done,
And every sound of revelry expired;
The lady and her lover, left alone,
The rosy flood of twilight's sky admired;
Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,
That heavenliest hour of Heaven is worthiest thee!

Ave Maria! blessed be the hour!
The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,
While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,

And not a breath crept through the rosy
air,
And yet the forest leaves seem'd stirr'd
with prayer.

Ave Maria ! 't is the hour of prayer !
Ave Maria ! 't is the hour of love !
Ave Maria ! may our spirits dare
Look up to thine and to thy Son's
above !

Ave Maria ! oh that face so fair !
Those downcast eyes beneath the Al-
mighty dove—
What though 't is but a pictured image
strike,
That painting is no idol,—'t is too like.

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,
In nameless print—that I have no de-
votion ;

But set those persons down with me to
pray,
And you shall see who has the proper-
est notion

Of getting into heaven the shortest way ;
My altars are the mountains and the
ocean,

Earth, air, stars,—all that springs from
the great Whole,

Who hath produced, and will receive
the soul.

Sweet hour of twilight !—in the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial
wood,

Rooted where once the Adrian wave
flow'd o'er,
To where the last Cæsarean fortress
stood,

Evergreen forest ! which Boccaccio's
lore

And Dryden's lay made haunted ground
to me,

How have I loved the twilight hour and
thee !

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
Making their summer lives one cease-
less song,

Were the sole echoes, save my steed's
and mine,

And vesper bell's that rose the boughs
along ;

The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,
His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the
fair throng

Which learn'd from this example not to
fly

From a true lover,—shadow'd my mind's
eye.

Oh, Hesperus ! thou bringest all good
things—

Home to the weary, to the hungry
cheer,

To the young bird the parent's brooding
wings,

The welcome stall to the o'erlabor'd
steer ;

Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone
clings,

Whate'er our household gods protect
of dear,

Are gather'd round us by thy look of
rest ;

Thou bring'st the child, too, to the
mother's breast.

Soft hour ! which wakes the wish and
melts the heart

Of those who sail the seas, on the first
day

When they from their sweet friends are
torn apart ;

Or fills with love the pilgrim on his
way

As the far bell of vesper makes him start,
Seeming to weep the dying day's
decay ;

Is this a fancy which our reason scorns ?
Ah ! surely nothing dies but something
mourns !

When Nero perish'd by the justest doom
Which ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,

Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,
Of nations freed, and the world over-
joy'd,

Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon
his tomb :

Perhaps the weakness of a heart not
void

Of feeling for some kindness done, when
power

Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

But I'm digressing ; what on earth has
Nero,

Or any such like sovereign buffoons,
To do with the transactions of my hero,

More than such madmen's fellow-man
—the moon's ?

Sure my invention must be down at zero,
And I grown one of many " wooden
spoons "

Of verse (the name with which we Can
tabs please

To dub the last of honors in degrees).

I feel this tediousness will never do—
'Tis being *too* epic, and I must cut down
(In copying) this long canto into two ;

They'll never find it out, unless I own
The fact, excepting some experienced
few ;

And then as an improvement 't will be
shown :

I'll prove that such the opinion of the
critic is

From Aristotle *passim*.—See Πουτυκίης.

Canto III. 1819-1820. August 8, 1821.

W. FROM CANTO IV

NOTHING so difficult as a beginning [St. 1
In poesy, unless perhaps the end ;

For oftentimes when Pegasus seems
winning

The race, he sprains a wing, and down
we tend,

Like Lucifer when hurl'd from heaven
for sinning ;

Our sin the same, and hard as his to
mend,

Being pride, which leads the mind to soar
too far,

Till our own weakness shows us what we
are.

But time, which brings all beings to their
level,

And sharp Adversity, will teach at last
Man,—and, as we would hope,—perhaps
the devil.

That neither of their intellects are vast :
While youth's hot wishes in our red veins
revel,

We know not this—the blood flows on
too fast :

But as the torrent widens towards the
ocean,

We ponder deeply on each past emotion.

As boy, I thought myself a clever fellow.
And wish'd that others held the same
opinion ;

They took it up when my days grew more
mellow,

And other minds acknowledged my
dominion :

Now my sere fancy "falls into the yellow
Leaf," and Imagination droops her
pinion,

And the sad truth which hovers o'er my
desk

Turns what was once romantic to bur-
lesque.

And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
'Tis that I may not weep ; and if I
weep,

'Tis that our nature cannot always bring
Itself to apathy, for we must steep
Our hearts first in the depths of Lethe's
spring,

Ere what we least wish to behold will
sleep :

Thetis baptized her mortal son in Styx ;
A mortal mother would on Lethe fix.

Some have accused me of a strange design
Against the creed and morals of the
land,

And trace it in this poem every line ;
I don't pretend that I quite understand
My own meaning when I would be *very*
fine ;

But the fact is that I have nothing
plann'd,

Unless it were to be a moment merry,
A novel word in my vocabulary.

To the kind reader of our sober clime
This way of writing will appear exotic ;
Pulci was sire of the half-serious rhyme,
Who sang when chivalry was more
Quixotic,

And revell'd in the fancies of the time,
True knights, chaste dames, huge giant
kings despotic :

But all these, save the last, being obsolete,
I chose a modern subject as more meet.

How I have treated it, I do not know ;
Perhaps no better than they have
treated me,

Who have imputed such designs as show
Not what they saw, but what they
wish'd to see ;

But if it gives them pleasure, be it so,
This is a liberal age, and thoughts are
free :

Meantime Apollo plucks me by the ear,
And tells me to resume my story here.

Canto IV. 1819-1820. August 8, 1821.

FROM CANTO XI

LONDON LITERATURE AND SOCIETY

JUAN knew several languages—as well
He might—and brought them up with
skill, in time [St. 53

To save his fame with each accomplish'd
belle,

Who still regretted that he did not
rhy me.

There wanted but this requisite to swell
 His qualities (with them) into sublime :
 Lady Fitz-Frisky, and Miss Mævia Man-
 nish,
 Both long'd extremely to be sung in
 Spanish.

However, he did pretty well, and was
 Admitted as an aspirant to all
 The coteries, and, as in Banquo's glass,
 At great assemblies or in parties small,
 He saw ten thousand living authors pass,
 That being about their average num-
 eral ;

Also the eighty "greatest living poets,"
 As every paltry magazine can show *it's*.

In twice five years the "greatest living
 poet."

Like to the champion fisty in the ring,
 Is call'd on to support his claim, or show
 it,

Although 't is an imaginary thing.
 Even I—albeit I'm sure I did not know it,
 Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be
 king,—

Was reckon'd a considerable time,
 The grand Napoleon of the realms of
 rhyme.

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero
 My Leipsic, and my Mont Saint Jean
 seems Cain :

"La Belle Alliance" of dunces down at
 zero,

Now that the Lion's fall'n, may rise
 again :

But I will fall at least as fell my hero ;
 Nor reign at all, or as a *monarch* reign ;
 Or to some lonely isle of gaolers go,
 With turncoat Southey for my turnkey
 Lowe.

Sir Walter reign'd before me ; Moore
 and Campbell

Before and after : but now grown more
 holy,

The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble
 With poets almost clergymen, or
 wholly :

And Pegasus has a psalmodic amble
 Beneath the very Reverend Rowley
 Powley,

Who shoes the glorious animal with
 stilts,

A modern Ancient Pisto—"by these
 hilts!"

Still he excels that artificial hard
 Laborer in the same vineyard, though
 the vine

Yields him but vinegar for his reward,—
 That neutralized dull Dorus of the
 Nine ;

That swarthy Sporus, neither man nor
 bard ;

That ox of verse, who *ploughs* for every
 line :—

Cambyses' roaring Romans beat at least
 The howling Hebrews of Cybele's
 priest. —

Then there's my gentle Euphues ; who,
 they say,

Sets up for being a sort of *moral me* :¹
 He 'll find it rather difficult some day

To turn out both, or either, it may be.
 Some persons think that Coleridge hath
 the sway ;

And Wordsworth has supporters. two
 or three ;

And that deep-mouth'd Bœotian "Sav-
 age Lander"

Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's
 gander.

John Keats, who was kill'd off by one
 critique,²

Just as he really promised something
 great,

If not intelligible, without Greek
 Contrived to talk about the Gods of
 late,

Much as they might have been supposed
 to speak.

Poor fellow ! His was an untoward fate ;
 'T is strange the mind, that very fiery
 particle,

Should let itself be snuff'd out by an
 article.

The list grows long of live and dead pre-
 tenders

To that which none will gain—or none
 will know

The conqueror at least ; who, ere Time
 renders

His last award, will have the long grass
 grow

Above his burnt-out brain, and sapless
 cinders.

If I might augur, I should rate but low

¹ Barry Cornwall, once called "a moral Byron."

² The entirely mistaken idea that Keats' decline and death were due to the severe criticism on his *Endymion* in the Quarterly Review, was shared by Shelley, and was generally prevalent until the publication of Milnes' Life of Keats. See H. Buxton Forman's edition of Keats' Works, Vol. IV., pp. 225-272, and Colvin's Life of Keats, pp. 124 and 208.

Their chances;—they 're too numerous,
like the thirty
Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals wax'd
but dirty.

This is the literary *lower* empire,
Where the prætorian bands take up
the matter;—
A "dreadful trade," like his who "ga-
thers samphire,"
The insolent soldiery to soothe and
flatter,
With the same feelings as you'd coax a
vampire.
•Now, were I once at home, and in
good satire,
I'd try conclusions with those Janizaries,
And show them *what* an intellectual
war is.

I think I know a trick or two, would
turn
Their flanks;—but it is hardly worth
my while
With such small gear to give myself
concern:
Indeed I've not the necessary bile;
My natural temper's really aught but
stern.
And even my Muse's worst reproof's a
smile;
And then she drops a brief and modern
curtsy,
And glides away, assured she never
hurts ye.

My Juan, whom I left in deadly peril
Amongst live poets and blue ladies,
pass'd
With some small profit through that
field so sterile,
Being tired in time, and neither least
nor last,
Left it before he had been treated very
ill;
And henceforth found himself more
gaily class'd
Amongst the higher spirits of the day,
The sun's true son, no vapor, but a ray.

His morns he pass'd in business—which
dissected,
Was like all business, a laborious noth-
ing
That leads to lassitude, the most infected
And Centaur Nessus garb of mortal
clothing,
And on our sofas makes us lie dejected,
And talk in tender horrors of our
loathing

All kinds of toil, save for our country's
good—
Which grows no better, though 't is time
it should.

His afternoons he pass'd in visits, lunch-
eons,
Lounging, and boxing; and the twi-
light hour
In riding round those vegetable punch-
eons
Call'd "Parks," where there is neither
fruit nor flower
Enough to gratify a bee's slight munch-
ings;
But after all it is the only "bower"
(In Moore's phrase) where the fashion-
able fair
Can form a slight acquaintance with
fresh air.

Then dress, then dinner, then awakes the
world!
Then glare the lamps, then whirl the
wheels, then roar
Through street and square fast flashing
chariots hurl'd
Like harness'd meteors; then along
the floor
Chalk mimics painting; then festoons
are twirl'd;
Then roll the brazen thunders of the
door,
Which opens to the thousand happy few
An earthly Paradise of "Or Molu."

There stands the noble hostess, nor shall
sink
With the three-thousandth curtsy;
there the waltz,
The only dance which teaches girls to
think,
Makes one in love even with its very
faults.
Saloon, room, hall, o'erflow beyond their
brink,
And long the latest of arrivals halts,
'Midst royal dukes and dames condemn'd
to climb,
And gain an inch of staircase at a time.

Thrice happy he who, after a survey
Of the good company, can win a corner,
A door that's *in* or boudoir *out* of the
way,
Where he may fix himself like small
"Jack Horner,"
And let the Babel round run as it may,
And look on as a mourner, or a scorner

Or an approver, or a mere spectator,
Yawning a little as the night grows later.

But this won't do, save by and by ; and he
Who, like Don Juan, takes an active
share,

Must steer with care through all that
glittering sea

Of gems and plumes and pearls and
silks, to where

He deems it is his proper place to be ;
Dissolving in the waltz to some soft
air,

Or prouder prancing with mercurial
skill,

Where Science marshals forth her own
quadrille.

Or, if he dance not, but hath higher
views

Upon an heiress or his neighbor's
bride,

Let him take care that that which he
pursues

Is not at once too palpably descried.

Full many an eager gentleman oft rues
His haste ; impatience is a blundering
guide,

Amongst a people famous for reflection,
Wholike to play the fool with circum-
spection.

But, if you can contrive, get next at
supper ;

Or if forestall'd, get opposite and
ogle :—

Oh, ye ambrosial moments ! always
upper

In mind, a sort of sentimental bogle,
Which sits for ever upon memory's
crupper,

The ghost of vanish'd pleasures once in
vogue ! Ill

Can tender souls relate the rise and fall
Of hopes and fears which shake a single
ball.

But these precautionary hints can touch
Only the common run, who must
pursue,

And watch, and ward ; whose plans a
word too much

Or little overturns ; and not the few
Or many (for the number's sometimes
such)

Whom a good mien, especially if new,
Or fame, or name, for wit, war, sense,
or nonsense.

Permits whate'er they please, or *did* not
long since.

Our hero, as a hero, young and hand
some,

Noble, rich, celebrated, and a stranger
Like other slaves of course must pay his
ransom,

Before he can escape from so much
danger

As will environ a conspicuous man.
Some

Talk about poetry, and "rack and
manger,"

And ugliness, disease, as toil and
trouble ;—

I wish they knew the life of a young
noble.

They are young, but know not youth—
it is anticipated ;

Handsome but wasted, rich without
a sou ;

Their vigor in a thousand arms is
dissipated ;

Their cash comes *from*, their wealth
goes *to* a Jew ;

Both senates see their nightly votes par-
ticipated

Between the tyrant's and the tribunes'
crew ;

And having voted, dined, drank, gamed,
and whored,

The family vault receives another lord.

.

But "carpe diem," Juan, "carpe, carpe!"

To-morrow sees another race as gay
And transient and devour'd by the same
harpy.

"Life's a poor player,"—then "play
out the play,

Ye villains !" and above all keep a sharp
eye

Much less on what you do than what
you say :

Be hypocritical, be cautious, be
Not what you *seem*, but always what
you *see*.

But how shall I relate in other cantos
Of what befell our hero in the land,
Which 'tis the common cry and lie to
vaunt as

A moral country ? But I hold my
hand—

For I disdain to write an Atalantis ;

But 'tis as well at once to understand
You are *not* a moral people, and you
know it

Without the aid of too sincere a poet.

What Juan saw and underwent shall be
My topic, with of course the due restriction

Which is required by proper courtesy ;
And recollect the work is only fiction,
And that I sing of neither mine nor me,
Though every scribe, in some slight
turn of diction, [doubt
Will hint allusions never meant. Ne'er
This—when I speak, I don't hint, but
speak out.

Whether he married with the third or
fourth

Offspring of some sage husband-hunt-
ing countess, [worth
Or whether with some virgin of more
(I mean in Fortune's matrimonial
bounties)

He took to regularly peopling Earth
Of which your lawful, awful wedlock
fount is,—

Or whether he was taken in for dam-
ages, [ages,—
For being too excursive in his hom-

Is yet within the unread events of time.
Thus far, go forth, thou lay, which I
will back

Against the same given quantity of
rhyme, [tack

For being as much the subject of at-
As ever yet was any work sublime,

By those who love to say that white is
black.

So much the better !—I may stand alone,
But would not change my free thoughts
for a throne.

Canto XI. 1822-1823. August 29, 1823.

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT,¹

BY

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO EN-
TITLED BY THE AUTHOR OF "WAT
TYLER"

"A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word."

¹Southey published in 1821 a poem called "A Vision of Judgment," in which he extolled George III. for his personal virtues, and described his reception into heaven. In the Preface of this poem he bitterly attacked Byron for immorality in his writings. See full accounts of the affair in the biographies of Byron and Southey. The briefest and best treatment of it is in Nichol's Life of Byron, toward the end of Chapter VIII.

PREFACE

It hath been wisely said, that "One fool makes many;" and it hath been poetically observed—

"That fools rush in where angels fear to tread."—POPE.

If Mr. Southey had not rushed in where he had no business, and where he never was before, and never will be again, the following poem would not have been written. It is not impossible that it may be as good as his own, seeing that it cannot, by any species of stupidity, natural or acquired, be worse. The gross flattery, the dull impudence, the renegade intolerance, and impious cant, of the poem by the author of "Wat Tyler," are something so stupendous as to form the sublime of himself—containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem—a word on his preface. In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed "Satanic School," the which he doth recommend to the notice of the legislature; thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an informer. If there exists anywhere except in his imagination, such a School, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is, that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have "talked of him;" for they laughed consumedly.¹

I think I know enough of most of the writers to whom he is supposed to allude, to assert, that they, in their individual capacities, have done more good, in the charities of life, to their fellow-creatures, in any one year, than Mr. Southey has done harm to himself by his absurdities in his whole life; and this is saying a great deal. But I have a few questions to ask.

1stly, Is Mr. Southey the author of "Wat Tyler"?

2ndly, Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication?

3dly, Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full parliament, "a rancorous renegade?"

4thly, Is he not poet laureate, with his own lines on Martin the regicide staring him in the face?

And, 5thly, Putting the four preceding items together, with what conscience dare he call the attention of the laws to the publications of others, be they what they may?

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding, its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the motive, which is neither more nor less than that Mr. S. has been laughed at a little in some recent publications, as he was of yore in the "Anti-Jacobin," by his present patrons. Hence all this "skimble-scamble stuff" about "Satanic," and so forth. However it is worthy of him—"qualis ab incepto."

If there is anything obnoxious to the political opinions of a portion of the public in the following poem, they may thank Mr. Southey. He might have written hexameters, as he has written everything else, for aught that the writer cared—had they been upon another subject. But to attempt to canonize a monarch, who, whatever were his household virtues, was neither a successful nor a patriot king,—inasmuch as several years of his reign passed in war with America and Ireland, to say nothing of the aggression upon France,—like all other exaggeration, necessarily begets opposition. In whatever manner he may be spoken of in this new

"Vision," his *public* career will not be more favorably transmitted by history. Of his private virtues (although a little expensive to the nation) there can be no doubt.

With regard to the supernatural personages treated of, I can only say that I know as much about them, and (as an honest man) have a better right to talk of them than Robert Southey. I have also treated them more tolerantly. The way in which that poor insane creature, the Laureate, deals about his judgments in the next world, is like his own judgment in this. If it was not completely ludicrous, it would be something worse. I don't think that there is much more to say at present.

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

SAINT PETER sat by the celestial gate :

His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,

So little trouble had been given of late ;

Not that the place by any means was full,

But since the Gallic era "eighty-eight"

The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull,

And "a pull altogether," as they say

At sea—which drew most souls another way.

The angels all were singing out of tune,
And hoarse with having little else to do,

Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,

Or curb a runaway young star or two,

Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon

Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,

Splitting some planet with its playful tail,

As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

The guardian seraphs had retired on high,

Finding their charges past all care below ;

Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the sky

Save the recording angel's black bureau :

Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply

With such rapidity of vice and woe,

That he had stripp'd off both his wings in quills,

And yet was in arrear of human ills.

His business so augmented of late years,

That he was forced, against his will no doubt,

(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers,)

For some resource to turn himself about,

And claim the help of his celestial peers,
To aid him ere he should be quite worn out

By the increased demand for his remarks :

Six angels and twelve saints were named his clerks.

This was a handsome board—at least for heaven ;

And yet they had even then enough to do,

So many conquerors' cars were daily driven,

So many kingdoms fitted up anew ;

Each day too slew its thousands six or seven,

Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,

They threw their pens down in divine disgust—

The page was so besmear'd with blood and dust.

This by the way ; 'tis not mine to record
What angels shrink from : even the very devil

On this occasion his own work abhorr'd,
So surfeited with the infernal revel :

Though he himself had sharpen'd every sword,

It almost quench'd his innate thirst of evil.

(Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—

'T is, that he has both generals in reversion.)

Let's skip a few short years of hollow peace,

Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont,

And heaven none—they form the tyrant's lease,

With nothing but new names subscribed upon 't ;

'T will one day finish : meantime they increase,

"With seven heads and ten horns," and all in front,

Like Saint John's foretold beast ; but ours are born

Less formidable in the head than horn.

In the first year of freedom's second dawn

Died George the Third ; although no tyrant, one

Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn

Left him nor mental nor external sun ;
A better farmer ne'er brush'd dew from lawn,

A worse king never left a realm undone !

He died—but left his subjects still behind,

One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.

He died ! his death made no great stir on earth :

His burial made some pomp ; there was profusion

Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great dearth

Of aught but tears—save those shed by collusion.

For these things may be bought at their true worth ;

Of elegy there was the due infusion—
Bought also ; and the torches, cloaks, and banners,

Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,

Form'd a sepulchral melodrame. Of all the fools who flock'd to swell or see the show,

Who cared about the corpse ? The funeral

Made the attraction, and the black the woe.

There throbb'd not there a thought which pierced the pall ;

And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,

It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.

So mix his body with the dust ! It might
Return to what it *must* far sooner, were

The natural compound left alone to fight
Its way back into earth, and fire, and air ;

But the unnatural balsams merely blight
What nature made him at his birth, as bare

As the mere million's base unummied clay—

Yet all his spices but prolong decay.

He's dead—and upper earth with him has done ;

He's buried ; save the undertaker's bill,
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone

For him, unless he left a German will ;

But where's the proctor who will ask his son ?

In whom his qualities are reigning still,

Except that household virtue, most uncommon,

Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

" God save the king ! " It is a large economy

In God to save the like ; but if he will
Besaving, all the better ; for not one am I
Of those who think damnation better still :

I hardly know too if not quite alone am I
In this small hope of bettering future ill
By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,

The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

I know this is unpopular ; I know

'Tis blasphemous ; I know one may be damn'd

For hoping no one else may e'er be so ;
I know my catechism ; I know we're cram'm'd

With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow ;

I know that all save England's church have sham'm'd,

And that the other twice two hundred churches

And synagogues have made a *damn'd* bad purchase.

God help us all ! God help me too ! I am,
God knows, as helpless as the devil can wish,

And not a whit more difficult to damn,
Than is to bring to land a late-hook'd fish,

Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb ;
Not that I'm fit for such a noble dish,

As one day will be that immortal fry
Of almost everybody born to die.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,

And nodded o'er his keys ; when, lo ! there came

A wondrous noise he had not heard of late—

A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and flame ;

In short, a roar of things extremely great,

Which would have made aught save a saint exclaim ;

But he, with first a start and then a wink,

Said, " There's another star gone out, I [think !

But ere he could return to his repose,
A cherub flapp'd his right wing o'er
his eyes—

At which St. Peter yawn'd, and rubb'd
his nose :

“ Saint porter,” said the angel, “ pri-
thee rise !”

Waving a goodly wing, which glow'd,
as glows

An earthly peacock's tail, with heav-
enly dyes :

To which the saint replied, “ Well,
what's the matter ?”

“ Is Lucifer come back with all this
clatter ?”

“ No,” quoth the cherub; “ George the
Third is dead.”

“ And who is George the Third ?” re-
plied the apostle :

“ *What George ? what Third ?*” “ The
king of England,” said

The angel. “ Well ! he won't find
kings to jostle

Him on his way ; but does he wear his
head ?

Because the last we saw here had a
tustle,

And ne'er would have got into heaven's
good graces,

Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

“ He was, if I remember, king of France ;
That head of his, which could not
keep a crown

On earth, yet ventured in my face to
advance

A claim to those of martyrs—like my
own :

If I had had my sword, as I had once
When I cut ears off, I had cut him
down ;

But having but my *keys*, and not my
brand,

I only knock'd his head from out his
hand.

“ And then he set up such a headless
howl,

That all the saints came out and took
him in ;

And there he sits by St. Paul, cheek by
jowl ;

That fellow Paul—the parvenu ! The
skin

Of St. Bartholomew, which makes his
cowl

In heaven, and upon earth redeem'd
his sin,

So as to make a martyr, never sped
Better than did this weak and wooden
head.

“ But had it come up here upon its
shoulders,

There would have been a different tale
to tell :

The fellow-feeling in the saints' beholders
Seems to have acted on them like a
spell,

And so this very foolish head heaven
solders

Back on its trunk : it may be very well,
And seems the custom here, to overthrow
Whatever has been wisely done below.”

The angel answer'd, “ Peter ! do not
pout :

The king who comes has head and all
entire,

And never knew much what it was
about—

He did as doth the puppet—by its wire,
And will be judged like all the rest, no
doubt :

My business and your own is not to
inquire

Into such matters, but to mind our cue—
Which is to act as we are bid to do.”

While thus they spake, the angelic cara-
van,

Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,
Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the
swan

Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile
or Indu,

Or Thames, or Tweed), and 'midst them
an old man

With an old soul, and both extremely
blind,

Halted before the gate, and in his shroud
Seated their fellow traveller on a cloud.

But bringing up the rear of this bright
host

A Spirit of a different aspect waved
His wings, like thunder-clouds above

some coast
Whose barren beach with frequent

wrecks is paved ;

His brow was like the deep when tem-
pest-toss'd ;

Fierce and unfathomable thoughts
engraved

Eternal wrath on his immortal face,
And *where* he gazed a gloom pervade'd
space.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate
 Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or Sin,
 With such a glance of supernatural hate,
 As made Saint Peter wish himself
 within ;

He patter'd with his keys at a great rate,
 And sweated through his apostolic
 skin :

Of course his perspiration was but ichor,
 Or some such other spiritual liquor.

The very cherubs huddled all together,
 Like birds when soars the falcon ; and
 they felt

A tingling to the tip of every feather,
 And form'd a circle like Orion's belt
 Around their poor old charge ; who
 scarce knew whither

His guards had led him, though they
 gently dealt

With royal manes (for by many stories,
 And true, we learn the angels all are
 Tories).

As things were in this posture, the gate
 flew

Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges
 Flung over space an universal hue

Of many-color'd flame, until its tinges
 Reach'd even our speck of earth, and
 made a new

Aurora borealis spread its fringes
 O'er the North Pole ; the same seen,
 when ice-bound,

By Captain Parry's crew, in "Melville's
 Sound."

And from the gate thrown open issued
 beaming

A beautiful and mighty Thing of
 Light,

Radiant with glory, like a banner stream-
 ing

Victorious from some world-o'erthrow-
 ing fight :

My poor comparisons must needs be
 teeming

With earthly likenesses, for here the
 night

Of clay obscures our best conceptions,
 saving

Johanna Southcote, or Bob Southey
 raving.

'Twas the archangel Michael ; all men
 know

The make of angels and archangels,
 since

There's scarce a scribbler has not one to
 show.

From the fiends' leader to the angels'
 prince ;

There also are some altar-pieces, though
 I really can't say that they much evince
 One's inner notions of immortal spirits ;
 But let the connoisseurs explain *their*
 merits.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good ;
 A goodly work of him from whom all
 glory

And good arise ; the portal past—he
 stood ;

Before him the young cherubs and
 saints hoary—

(I say *young*, begging to be understood
 By looks, not years ; and should be
 very sorry

To state, they were not older than St.
 Peter,

But merely that they seem'd a little
 sweeter).

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down
 before

That arch-angelic hierarch, the first
 Of essences angelical, who wore

The aspect of a god ; but this ne'er
 nursed

Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose
 core

No thought, save for his Master's
 service, durst

Intrude, however glorified and high ;
 He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

He and the sombre, silent Spirit met—
 They knew each other both for good
 and ill ;

Such was their power, that neither could
 forget

His former friend and future foe ; but
 still

There was a high, immortal, proud
 regret

In either's eye, as if 't were less their
 will

Than destiny to make the eternal years
 Their date of war, and their "champ
 clos" the spheres.

But here they were in neutral space: we
 know

From Job, that Satan hath the power
 to pay

A heavenly visit thrice a year or so ;
 And that the "sons of God," like those
 of clay,

Must keep him company ; and we might
 show

From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the Powers
Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up
hours.

And this is not a theologic tract,
To prove with Hebrew and with
Arabic,
If Job be allegory or a fact,
But a true narrative; and thus I pick
From out the whole but such and such
an act

As sets aside the slightest thought of
trick.
'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,
And accurate as any other vision.

The spirits were in neutral space, before
The gate of heaven; like eastern
thresholds is

The place where Death's grand cause is
argued o'er,
And souls despatch'd to that world or
to this;

And therefore Michael and the other
wore

A civil aspect: though they did not
kiss,
Yet still between his Darkness and his
Brightness

There pass'd a mutual glance of great
politeness.

The Archangel bow'd, not like a modern
beau,

But with a graceful Oriental bend,
Pressing one radiant arm just where be-
low

The heart in good men is supposed to
tend;

He turn'd as to an equal, not too low,
But kindly; Satan met his ancient
friend

With more hauteur, as might an old
Castilian

Poor noble meet a mushroom rich
civilian.

He merely bent his diabolic brow
An instant; and then raising it, he
stood

In act to assert his right or wrong, and
show

Cause why King George by no means
could or should

Make out a case to be exempt from woe
Eternal, more than other kings,
endued

With better sense and hearts, whom his
tory mentions,
Who long have "paved hell with their
good intentions."

Michael began: "What wouldst thou
with this man,

Now dead, and brought before the
Lord? What ill

Hath he wrought since his mortal race
began,

That thou canst claim him? Speak!
and do thy will,

If it be just: if in this earthly span
He hath been greatly failing to fulfil
His duties as a king and mortal, say,
And he is thine; if not, let him have
way."

"Michael!" replied the Prince of Air,
"even here,

Before the Gate of him thou servest,
must

I claim my subject: and will make
appear

That as he was my worshipper in dust,
So shall he be in spirit, although dear
To thee and thine, because nor wine
nor lust

Were of his weaknesses; yet on the
throne

He reign'd o'er millions to serve me
alone.

"Look to our earth, or rather *mine*; it
was,

Once, more thy Master's: but I triumph
not

In this poor planet's conquest; nor, alas!
Need he thou servest envy me my lot:

With all the myriads of bright worlds
which pass

In worship round him, he may have
forgot

Yon weak creation of such paltry things;
I think few worth damnation save their
kings,—

"And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to
Assert my right as lord: and even had

I such an inclination, it were (as you
Well know) superfluous; they are

grown so bad,
That hell has nothing better left to do

Than leave them to themselves: so
much more mad

And evil by their own internal curse,
Heaven cannot make them better, nor I
worse.

"Look to the earth, I said, and say again:
When this old, blind, mad, helpless,
weak, poor worm

Began in youth's first bloom and flush
to reign,

The world and he both wore a different form,

And much of earth and all the watery plain

Of ocean call'd him king: through many a storm

His isles had floated on the abyss of time;
For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.

"He came to his sceptre young; he leaves it old:

Look to the state in which he found his realm,

And left it; and his annals too behold,
How to a minion first he gave the helm;

How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm

The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but glance

Thine eye along America and France.

"'Tis true, he was a tool from first to last
(I have the workmen safe;) but as a tool
So let him be consumed. From out the past

Of ages, since mankind have known the rule

Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amass'd

Of sin and slaughter—from the Cæsar's school,

Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign

More drench'd with gore, more cumber'd with the slain.

"He ever warr'd with freedom and the free:

Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,

So that they utter'd the word 'Liberty!'
Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose

History was ever stain'd as his will be
With national and individual woes?

I grant his household abstinence; I grant
His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want;

"I know he was a constant consort; own

He was a decent sire, and middling lord.

All this is much, and most upon a throne;
As temperance, if at Apicius' board,
Is more than at an anchorite's supper shown.

I grant him all the kindest can accord;
And this was well for him, but not for those

Millions who found him what oppression chose.

"The New World shook him off; the Old yet groans

Beneath what he and his prepared, if not

Completed: he leaves heirs on many thrones

To all his vices, without what begot
Compassion for him—his tame virtues; drones

Who sleep, or despots who have now forgot

A lesson which shall be re-taught them, wake

Upon the thrones of earth; but let them quake!

"Five millions of the primitive, who hold
The faith which makes ye great on earth, implored

A part of that vast *all* they held of old,—
Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord,

Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter! cold

Must be your souls, if you have not abhor'd

The foe to Catholic participation
In all the license of a Christian nation.

"True! he allow'd them to pray God; but as

A consequence of prayer, refused the law

Which would have placed them upon the same base

With those who did not hold the saints in awe."

But here Saint Peter started from his place,

And cried, "You may the prisoner withdraw:

Ere heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelph,

While I am guard, may I be damn'd myself!

"Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange
My office (and *his* is no sinecure)

Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range

The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure!"
 "Saint!" replied Satan, "you do well to avenge
 The wrongs he made your satellites endure;
 And if to this exchange you should be given,
 I'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven!"

Here Michael interposed: "Good saint! and devil!

Pray, not so fast; you both outrun discretion.

Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil!

Satan, excuse this warmth of his expression,

And condescension to the vulgar's level:
 Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.

Have you got more to say?"—"No."
 "If you please,

I'll trouble you to call your witnesses."

Then Satan turn'd and waved his swarthy hand,
 Which stirr'd with its electric qualities

Clouds farther off than we can understand,

Although we find him sometimes in our skies;

Infernal thunder shook both sea and land
 In all the planets, and hell's batteries

Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions

As one of Satan's most sublime inventions.

This was a signal unto such damned souls
 As have the privilege of their damnation

Extended far beyond the mere controls
 Of worlds past, present, or to come;
 no station

Is theirs particularly in the rolls
 Of hell assign'd; but where their inclination

Or business carries them in search of game,

They may range freely—being damn'd the same.

They're proud of this—as very well they may,

It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key

Stuck in their loins; or like to an "entré"

Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry.

I borrow my comparisons from clay,
 Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be

Offended with such base low likenesses;
 We know their posts are nobler far than these.

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell—

About ten million times the distance reckon'd

From our sun to its earth, as we can tell
 How much time it takes up, even to a second,

For every ray that travels to dispel
 The fogs of London, through which, dimly beacon'd

The weathercocks are gilt some thrice a year.

If that the *summer* is not too severe:

I say that I can tell—'twas half a minute;

I know the solar beams take up more time

Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they begin it;

But then their telegraph is less sublime,

And if they ran a race, they would not win it

'Gainst Satan's courier's bound for their own clime.

The sun takes up some years for every ray

To reach its goal—the devil not half a day.

Upon the verge of space, about the size
 Of half-a-crown, a little speck appear'd

(I've seen a something like it in the skies
 In the *Ægean*, ere a squall); it near'd,

And, growing bigger, took another guise;
 Like an aerial ship it tack'd, and steer'd.

Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the grammar

Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer;—

But take your choice): and then it grew a cloud

And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.

But such a cloud! No land e'er saw a crowd

Of locusts numerous as the heavens
 saw these ;
 They shadowed with their myriads
 space ; their loud
 And varied cries were like those of
 wild geese
 (If nations may be liken'd to a goose).
 And realized the phrase of "hell broke
 loose."

Here crashed a sturdy oath of stout John
 Bull,
 Who damned away his eyes as heretofore :

There Paddy brogued "By Jasus!"—
 "What's your wull?"

The temperate Scot exclaimed : the
 French ghost swore

In certain terms I shan't translate in
 full,

As the first coachman will ; and 'midst
 the war,

The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,

"Our president is going to war, I guess."

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch,
 and Dane ;

In short, an universal shoal of shades,
 From Otaheite's isle to Salisbury Plain,
 Of all climes and professions, years
 and trades,

Ready to swear against the good king's
 reign,

Bitter as clubs in cards are against
 spades :

All summon'd by this grand "subpoena,"
 to

Try if kings mayn't be damn'd like me
 or you.

When Michael saw this host, he first
 grew pale,

As angels can ; next, like Italian
 twilight,

He turn'd all colors—as a peacock's tail,
 Or sunset streaming through a Gothic
 skylight

In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,
 Or distant lightning on the horizon *by*
 night,

Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review
 Of thirty regiments in red, green and
 blue.

Then he address'd himself to Satan :
 "Why—

My good old friend, for such I deem
 you, though

Our different parties make us fight so
 sly,

I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe ;
 Our difference is *political*, and I

Trust that, whatever may occur below,
 You know my great respect for you :
 and this

Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss—

"Why, my dear Lucifer, would you
 abuse

My call for witnesses ? I did not mean
 That you should half of earth and hell
 produce ;

'Tis even superfluous, since two honest,
 clean,

True testimonies are enough : we lose

Our time, nay, our eternity, between

The accusation and defence : if we

Hear both, 'twill stretch our immor-
 tality."

Satan replied, "To me the matter is
 Indifferent, in a personal point of
 view :

I can have fifty better souls than this
 With far less trouble than we have
 gone through

Already ; and I merely argued his
 Late Majesty of Britain's case with
 you

Upon a point of form : you may dispose
 Of him ; I've kings enough below, God
 knows !"

Thus spoke the Demon (late call'd
 "multi-faced"

By multo-scribbling Southey). "Then
 we'll call

One or two persons of the myriads placed
 Around our congress, and dispense
 with all

The rest," quoth Michael : "Who may
 be so graced

As to speak first ? there's choice
 enough—who shall

It be ?" Then Satan answer'd, "There
 are many ;

But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well
 as any."

A merry, cock-eyed, curious-looking
 sprite

Upon the instant started from the
 throng,

Dress'd in a fashion now forgotten quite ;
 For all the fashions of the flesh stick
 long

By people in the next world ; where
 unite

All the costumes since Adam's, right
or wrong,
From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petti-
coat,
Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

The spirit look'd around upon the crowds
Assembled, and exclaim'd, "My
friends of all
The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst
these clouds;
So let's to business: why this general
call?

If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,
And 'tis for an election that they bawl,
Behold a candidate with unturn'd coat!
Saint Peter, may I count upon your
vote?"

"Sir," replied Michael, "you mistake;
these things
Are of a former life, and what we do
Above is more august; to judge of kings
Is the tribunal met: so now you
know."

"Then I presume those gentlemen with
wings,"

Said Wilkes, "are cherubs; and that
soul below
Looks much like George the Third, but
to my mind

A good deal older—Bless me! is he
blind?"

"He is what you behold him, and his
doom

Depends upon his deeds," the Angel
said;

"If you have aught to arraign in him,
the tomb

Gives license to the humblest beggar's
head

To lift itself against the loftiest."—
"Some,"

Said Wilkes, "don't wait to see them
laid in lead,

For such a liberty—and I, for one,
Have told them what I thought beneath
the sun."

"Above the sun repeat, then, what thou
hast

To urge against him," said the Arch-
angel. "Why,"

Replied the spirit, "since old scores are
past,

Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.
Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,

With all his Lords and Commons: in
the sky

I don't like ripping up old stories, since
His conduct was but natural in a prince.

"Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to
oppress

A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;
But then I blame the man himself much
less

Than Bute and Grafton, and shall be
unwilling

To see him punish'd here for their excess,
Since they were both damn'd long
ago, and still in

Their place below: for me, I have for-
given,

And vote his 'habeas corpus' into
heaven."

"Wilkes," said the Devil, "I understand
all this:

You turn'd to half a courtier ere you
died,

And seem to think it would not be amiss

To grow a whole one on the other side
Of Charon's ferry; you forget that *his*

Reign is concluded; whatsoe'er betide,
He won't be sovereign more: you've lost
your labor,

For at the best he will but be your neigh-
bor.

"However, I knew what to think of it,
When I beheld you in your jesting way,
Flitting and whispering round about the
spit

Where Belial, upon duty for the day,
With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,

His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:
That fellow even in hell breeds farther

ills;
I'll have him *gagg'd*—'twas one of his
own bills.

"Call Junius!" From the crowd a
shadow stalk'd,

And at the name there was a general
squeeze,

So that the very ghosts no longer walk'd
In comfort, at their own aerial ease,

But were all ramm'd, and jamm'd (but
to be balk'd,

As we shall see), and jostled hands
and knees,

Like wind compress'd and pent within a
bladder,

Or like a human colic, which is sadder.

The shadow came—a tall, thin, gray-
hair'd figure,

That look'd as it had been a shade on
earth;
Quick in its motions, with an air of vigor,
But naught to mark its breeding or its
birth;
Now it wax'd little, then again grew
bigger,
With now an air of gloom, or savage
mirth;
But as you gaz'd upon its features, they
Changed every instant—to *what*, none
could say.

The more intently the ghosts gaz'd, the
less
Could they distinguish whose the
features were;
The Devil himself seem'd puzzled even
to guess;
They varied like a dream—now here,
now there;
And several people swore from out the
press,
They knew him perfectly; and one
could swear
He was his father: upon which another
Was sure he was his mother's cousin's
brother:

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,
An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,
A nabob, a man-midwife; but the wight
Mysterious changed his countenance
at least
As oft as they their minds; though in
full sight
He stood, the puzzle only was in-
creased;
The man was a phantasmagoria in
Himself—he was so volatile and thin.

The moment that you had pronounced
him *one*,
Presto! his face changed, and he
was another;
And when that change was hardly well
put on,
It varied, till I don't think his own
mother
(If that he had a mother) would her son
Have known, he shifted so from one to
t'other:
Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,
At this epistolary "Iron Mask."

For sometimes he like Cerberus would
seem—
"Three gentlemen at once" (as sagely
says

Good Mrs. Malaprop); then you might
deem
That he was not even *one*; now many
rays
Were flashing round him; and now a
thick steam
Hid him from sight—like fogs on Lon-
don days:
Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to
people's fancies,
And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.

I've an hypothesis—'tis quite my own;
I never let it out till now, for fear
Of doing people harm about the throne,
And injuring some minister or peer,
On whom the stigma might perhaps be
blown;
It is—my gentle public, lend thine ear!
'Tis that what Junius we are wont to
call
Was *really*, *truly*, nobody at all.

I don't see wherefore letters should not
be
Written without hands, since we daily
view
Them written without heads; and books,
we see,
Are fill'd as well without the latter too:
And really till we fix on somebody
For certain sure to claim them as his
due,
Their author, like the Niger's mouth,
will bother
The world to say if *there* be mouth or
author.

"And who and what art thou?" the
Archangel said.
"For *that* you may consult my title-
page,"
Replied this mighty shadow of a shade:
"If I have kept my secret half an age,
I scarce shall tell it now."—"Canst thou
upbraid,"
Continued Michael, "George Rex, or
allege
Aught further?" Junius answer'd, "You
had better
First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:

"My charges upon record will outlast
The brass of both his epitaph and
tomb."
"Repent'st thou not," said Michael, "of
some past
Exaggeration? something which may
doom

Thyself if false, as him if true? Thou
wast

Too bitter—is it not so?—in thy gloom
Of passion?"—"Passion!" cried the
phantom dim,

"I loved my country, and I hated him.

"What I have written, I have written :
let

The rest be on his head or mine!" so
spoke

Old "Nominis Umbra;" and while
speaking yet,

Away he melted in celestial smoke.

Then Satan said to Michael, "Don't
forget

To call George Washington, and John
Horne Tooke,

And Franklin;"—but at this time there
was heard

A cry for room, though not a phantom
stirr'd.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and
the aid

Of cherubim appointed to that post,
The devil Asmodeus to the circle made

His way, and look'd as if his journey
cost

Some trouble. When his burden down
he laid,

"What's this?" cried Michael; "why,
'tis not a ghost?"

"I know it," quoth the incubus; "but he
Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

"Confound the renegado! I have sprain'd
My left wing, he'sso heavy; one would
think

Some of his works about his neck were
chain'd.

But to the point; while hovering o'er
the brink

Of Skiddaw (where as usual it still
rain'd),

I saw a taper, far below me, wink,
And stooping, caught this fellow at a
libel—

No less on history than the Holy Bible.

"The former is the devil's scripture, and
The latter yours, good Michael: so the
affair

Belongs to all of us, you understand.

I snatch'd him up just as you see him
there,

And brought him off for sentence out of
hand:

I've scarcely been ten minutes in the
air—

At least a quarter it can hardly be:
I dare say that his wife is still at tea."

Here Satan said, "I know this man of
old,

And have expected him for some time
here;

A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,
Or more conceited in his petty sphere:

But surely it was not worth while to fold
Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus

dear:

We had the poor wretch safe (without
being bored

With carriage) coming of his own accord.

"But since he's here, let's see what he
has done."

"Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he antici-
pates

The very business you are now upon,
And scribbles as if head clerk to the

Fates.

Who knows to what his ribaldry may
run,

When such an ass as this, like Balaam's,
prates?"

"Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he
has to say:

You know we're bound to that in every
way."

Now the bard, glad to get an audience,
which

By no means often was his case below,
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem,
and pitch

His voice into that awful note of woe
To all unhappy hearers within reach

Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in
flow;

But stuck fast with his first hexameter.
Not one of all whose gouty feet would
stir.

But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be
spurr'd

Into recitative, in great dismay

Both cherubim and seraphim were heard
To murmur loudly through their long

array;

And Michael rose ere he could get a word
Of all his founder'd verses under way,

And cried, "For God's sake stop, my
friend! 'twere best—

Non Di, non homines—you know the
rest."

A general bustle spread throughout the
throng,

Which seem'd to hold all verse in detestation :

The angels had of course enough of song
When upon service ; and the generation
Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long

Before, to profit by a new occasion :
The monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd,
" What ! what !

Pye come again ? No more—no more of that ! "

The tumult grew ; an universal cough
Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,

When Castlereagh has been up long enough

(Before he was first minister of state,
I mean—the *slaves hear now*) ; some cried
" Off, off ! "

As at a farce ; till, grown quite desperate,

The bard Saint Peter pray'd to interpose
(Himself an author) only for his prose.

The varlet was not an ill-favor'd knave :

A good deal like a vulture in the face,
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye,
which gave

A smart and sharper-looking sort of grace

To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,

Was by no means so ugly as his case ;
But that, indeed, was hopeless as can be,
Quite a poetic felony "*de se*."

Then Michael blew his trump, and still'd the noise

With one still greater, as is yet the mode
On earth besides ; except some grumbling voice,

Which now and then will make a slight inroad

Upon decorous silence, few will twice
Lift up their lungs when fairly over-crow'd ;

And now the bard could plead his own bad cause,

With all the attitudes of self-applause.

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,

He meant no harm in scribbling ; 'twas his way

Upon all topics ; 'twas, besides, his bread,

Of which he butter'd both sides ;
'twould delay

Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread),

And take up rather more time than a day,

To name his works—he would but cite a few—

" Wat Tyler "—" Rhymes on Blenheim "—" Waterloo."

He had written praises of a regicide ;

He had written praises of all kings whatever ;

He had written for republics far and wide,

And then against them bitterer than ever ;

For pantisocracy he once had cried

Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever ;

Then grew a hearty anti-Jacobin—

Had turn'd his coat—and would have turn'd his skin.

He had sung against all battles, and again

In their high praise and glory ; he had call'd

Reviewing " the ungente craft," and then

Become as base a critic as e'er crawl'd—

Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men
By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd :

He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,

And more of both than anybody knows.

He had written Wesley's life : here turning round

To Satan, " Sir, I'm ready to write yours,

In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
With notes and preface, all that most allures

The pious purchaser ; and there's no ground

For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers :

So let me have the proper documents,
That I may add you to my other saints."

Satan bow'd, and was silent. " Well, if you,

With amiable modesty, decline
My offer, what says Michael ? There are few

Whose memoirs could be render'd more divine.

Mine is a pen of all work ; not so new

As it was once, but I would make you
shine
Like your own trumpet. By the way,
my own
Has more of brass in it, and is as well
blown.

" But talking about trumpets, here's my
Vision !

Now you shall judge, all people ; yes,
you shall

Judge with my judgment, and by my
decision

Be guided who shall enter heaven or
fall.

I settle all these things by intuition,

Times present, past, to come, heaven,
hell, and all,

Like King Alfonso. When I thus see
double,

I save the Deity some worlds of trouble."

He ceased, and drew forth an MS. ; and
no

Persuasion on the part of devils, saints,
Or angels, now could stop the torrent ;
so

He read the first three lines of the
contents ;

But at the fourth, the whole spiritual
show

Had vanish'd, with variety of scents,
Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they
sprang,

Like lightning, off from his " melodious
twang."

Those grand heroics acted as a spell :

The angels stopp'd their ears and
plied their pinions ;

The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down
to hell ;

The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their
own dominions—

(For 'tis not yet decided where they
dwell,

And I leave every man to his opinions) ;
Michael took refuge in his trump—but,
lo !

His teeth were set on edge, he could not
blow !

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been
known

For an impetuous saint, upraised his
keys,

And at the fifth line knock'd the poet
down ;

Who fell like Phaëton, but more at
ease,
Into his lake, for there he did not drown ;
A different web being by the Destinies
Woven for the Laureate's final wreath,
where'er
Reform shall happen either here or there.

He first sank to the bottom—like his
works,

But soon rose to the surface—like him-
self ;

For all corrupted things are buoy'd like
corks,

By their own rottenness, like as an elf,
Or wisp that flits o'er a morass : he
lurks.

It may be, still, like dull books on a
shelf,

In his own den, to scrawl some " Life "
or " Vision,"

As Welborn says—" the devil turn'd pre-
cision."

As for the rest, to come to the conclu-
sion

Of this true dream, the telescope is
gone

Which kept my optics free from all
delusion,

And show'd me what I in my turn
have shown ;

All I saw farther, in the last confusion,
Was, that King George slipp'd into
heaven for one ;

And when the tumult dwindled to a
calm,

I left him practising the hundredth
psalm.

May 7—October 4, 1821. October 15, 1822.

IMPROMPTUS¹

STRAHAN, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
Patron and publisher of rhymes,
For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,
My Murray.

To thee, with hope and terror dumb,
The unfledged MS. authors come ;
Thou printest all—and sellest some—
My Murray.

Upon thy table's baize so green
The last new Quarterly is seen,—
But where is thy new Magazine,
My Murray ?

¹ From letters addressed to Mr. Murray, or to
Thomas Moore.

Along thy sprucest bookshelves shine
The works thou deemest most divine—
The "Art of Cookery," and mine,
My Murray.

Tours, Travels, Essays, too, I wist,
And Sermons, to thy mill bring grist;
And then thou hast the "Navy List,"
My Murray.

And Heaven forbid I should conclude
Without "the Board of Longitude,"
Although this narrow paper would.
My Murray.
April 11, 1818. 1830.

WHEN a man hath no freedom to fight
for at home,
Let him combat for that of his neigh-
bors;
Let him think of the glories of Greece
and of Rome,
And get knock'd on the head for his
labors.

To do good to mankind is the chivalrous
plan,
And is always as nobly requited;
Then battle for freedom wherever you
can,
And, if not shot or hang'd, you'll get
knighted.
November 5, 1820. 1824.

So we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

February 28, 1817. 1830.

THE world is a bundle of hay,
Mankind are the asses who pull;
Each tugs it a different way,
And the greatest of all is John Bull.
November 5, 1820. 1830.

Who kill'd John Keats?
"I," says the Quarterly.¹
So savage and Tartarly;
"Twas one of my feats."

Who shot the arrow?
"The poet-priest Milman
(So ready to kill man),
Or Southey, or Barrow."

July 30, 1821. 1830.

FOR Orford and for Waldegrave
You give much more than me you gave;
Which is not fairly to behave.
My Murray.

Because if a live dog, 'tis said,
Be worth a lion fairly sped,
A live lord must be worth two dead,
My Murray.

And if, as the opinion goes,
Verse hath a better sale than prose,—
Certes, I should have more than those,
My Murray.

But now this sheet is nearly cramm'd,
So, if you will, I shan't be sham'd,
And if you won't, you may be damn'd,
My Murray.

August 23, 1821. 1830.

STANZAS WRITTEN ON THE ROAD BETWEEN FLORENCE AND PISA

OH, talk not to me of a name great in
story;
The days of our youth are the days of
our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-
and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever
so plenty.

What are garlands and crowns to the
brow that is wrinkled?
'Tis but as a dead flower with May-dew
be-sprinkled,
Then away with all such from the head
that is hoary!
What care I for the wreaths that can
only give glory!

Oh, FAME!—if I e'er took delight in thy
praises,

¹ See the note on page 254.

'Twas less for the sake of thy high-sounding phrases,
Than to see the bright eyes of the dear one discover,
She thought that I was not unworthy to love her.

There chiefly I sought thee, *there* only I found thee;
Her glance was the best of the rays that surround thee;
When it sparkled o'er aught that was bright in my story,
I knew it was love, and I felt it was glory.

November, 1821. 1830.

ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY
THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 't is not *here*—
Such thoughts should shake my soul
nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through
whom

Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood!—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be,

If thou regrettest thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honorable death
Is here:—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.

At Missolonghi, January 22, 1824
October 29, 1824.

SHELLEY

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SHELLEY

STANZAS—April, 1814¹

Away! the moor is dark beneath the
moon,
Rapid clouds have drank the last pale
beam of even:
Away! the gathering winds will call
the darkness soon,
And profoundest midnight shroud the
serene lights of heaven.

Pause not! The time is past! Every
voice cries, Away!
Tempt not with one last tear thy
friend's ungentle mood:
Thy lover's eye, so glazed and cold, dares
not entreat thy stay:
Duty and dereliction guide thee back
to solitude.

Away, away! to thy sad and silent
home;
Pour bitter tears on its desolated
hearth;
Watch the dim shades as like ghosts
they go and come,
And complicate strange webs of mel-
ancholy mirth.

The leaves of wasted autumn woods
shall float around thine head:
The blooms of dewy spring shall gleam
beneath thy feet:
But thy soul or this world must fade in
the frost that binds the dead,
Ere midnight's frown and morning's
smile, ere thou and peace may
meet.

The cloud shadows of midnight possess
their own repose,
For the weary winds are silent, or the
moon is in the deep:
Some respite to its turbulence unresting
ocean knows;

¹ See Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, Vol. I., pp.
10-411.

Whatever moves, or toils, or grieves,
hath its appointed sleep.

Thou in the grave shalt rest—yet till
the phantoms flee
Which that house and heath and gar-
den made dear to thee erewhile,
Thy remembrance, and repentance, and
deep musings are not free
From the music of two voices and
the light of one sweet smile.

1814. 1816.

TO COLERIDGE¹

ΔΑΚΡΥΣΙ ΔΙΟΙΣΙ ΠΟΤΜΟΝ ἈΠΟΤΜΟΝ

OH! THERE are spirits of the air,
And genii of the evening breeze,
And gentle ghosts, with eyes as fair
As star-beams among twilight trees:—
Such lovely ministers to meet
Oft hast thou turned from men thy
lonely feet.

With mountain winds, and babbling
springs,
And moonlight seas, that are the voice
Of these inexplicable things
Thou didst hold commune, and rejoice
When they did answer thee; but they
Cast, like a worthless boon, thy love
away.

And thou hast sought in starry eyes
Beams that were never meant for
thine,

¹ The poem beginning "Oh, there are spirits in the air" was addressed in idea to Coleridge, whom he never knew; and at whose character he could only guess imperfectly, through his writings, and accounts he heard of him from some who knew him well. He regarded his change of opinions as rather an act of will than conviction, and believed that in his inner heart he would be haunted by what Shelley considered the better and holier aspirations of his youth. (From Mrs. Shelley's *Note on the Early Poems*.) See also Dowden's *Life of Shelley*, Vol. I., p. 472 and note.

Another's wealth :—tame sacrifice

To a fond faith! still dost thou pine?
Still dost thou hope that greeting hands,
Voice, looks, or lips, may answer thy
demands?

Ah! wherefore didst thou build thine
hope

On the false earth's inconstancy?

Did thine own mind afford no scope

Of love, or moving thoughts to thee?

That natural scenes or human smiles
Could steal the power to wind thee in
their wiles.

Yes, all the faithless smiles are fled

Whose falsehood left thee broken-
hearted;

The glory of the moon is dead;

Night's ghosts and dreams have now
departed;

Thine own soul still is true to thee,

But changed to a foul fiend through
misery.

This fiend, whose ghastly presence ever

Beside thee like thy shadow hangs,
Dream not to chase;—the mad endea-
vor

Would scourge thee to severer pangs.
Be as thou art. Thy settled fate,

Dark as it is, all change would aggra-
vate. 1815. 1816.

ALASTOR,

OR

THE SPIRIT OF SOLITUDE

PREFACE

THE poem entitled *Alastor* may be considered as allegorical of one of the most interesting situations of the human mind. It represents a youth of uncorrupted feelings and adventurous genius led forth by an imagination inflamed and purified through familiarity with all that is excellent and majestic, to the contemplation of the universe. He drinks deep of the fountains of knowledge, and is still insatiate. The magnificence and beauty of the external world sinks profoundly into the frame of his conceptions, and affords to their modifications a variety not to be exhausted. So long as it is possible for his desires to point towards objects thus infinite and unmeasured, he is joyous, and tranquil, and self-possessed. But the period arrives when these objects cease to suffice. His mind is at length suddenly awakened and thirsts for intercourse with an intelligence similar to itself. He images to himself the Being whom he loves. Conversant with speculations of the sublimest and most perfect natures, the vision in which he embodies his own imaginations unites all of wonderful, or wise, or beautiful, which the poet,

the philosopher, or the lover could depicture. The intellectual faculties, the imagination, the functions of sense, have their respective requisitions on the sympathy of corresponding powers in other human beings. The Poet is represented as uniting these requisitions, and attaching them to a single image. He seeks in vain for a prototype of his conception. Blasted by his disappointment, he descends to an untimely grave.

The picture is not barren of instruction to actual men. The Poet's self-centred seclusion was avenged by the furies of an irresistible passion pursuing him to speedy ruin. But that Power which strikes the luminaries of the world with sudden darkness and extinction, by awakening them to too exquisite a perception of its influences, dooms to a slow and poisonous decay those meaner spirits that dare to abjure its dominion. Their destiny is more abject and inglorious as their delinquency is more contemptible and pernicious. They who, deluded by no generous error, instigated by no sacred thirst of doubtful knowledge, duped by no illustrious superstition, loving nothing on this earth, and cherishing no hopes beyond, yet keep aloof from sympathies with their kind, rejoicing neither in human joy nor mourning with human grief; these, and such as they, have their apportioned curse. They languish, because none feel with them their common nature. They are morally dead. They are neither friends, nor lovers, nor fathers, nor citizens of the world, nor benefactors of their country. Among those who attempt to exist without human sympathy, the pure and tender-hearted perish through the intensity and passion of their search after its communities, when the vacancy of their spirit suddenly makes itself felt. All else, selfish, blind, and torpid, are those unforeseeing multitudes who constitute, together with their own, the lasting misery and loneliness of the world. Those who love not their fellow-beings live unfruitful lives, and prepare for their old age a miserable grave.

"The good die first,
And those whose hearts are dry as summer dust,
Burn to the socket!"

December 14, 1815.

Nondum amabam, et amare amabam, quærebam quid amarem, amans amare.—*Confess. St. August.*

EARTH, ocean, air, beloved brotherhood!
If our great Mother has imbued my soul
With aught of natural piety to feel
Your love, and recompense the boon
with mine;
If dewy morn, and odorous noon, and
even,
With sunset and its gorgeous ministers,
And solemn midnight tingling silent-
ness;
If autumn's hollow sighs in the sere
wood,
And winter robing with pure snow and
crowns
Of starry ice the gray grass and bare
boughs;

If spring's voluptuous pantings when she
breathes
Her first sweet kisses, have been dear to
me ;
If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast
I consciously have injured, but still
loved
And cherished these my kindred ; then
forgive
This boast, belovèd brethren, and with-
draw
No portion of your wonted favor now !

Mother of this unfathomable world !
Favor my solemn song, for I have loved
Thee ever, and thee only ; I have
watched
Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy
steps,
And my heart ever gazes on the depth
Of thy deep mysteries. I have made
my bed
In charnels and on coffins, where black
death
Keeps record of the trophies won from
thee,
Hoping to still these obstinate ques-
tionings
Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone
ghost,
Thy messenger, to render up the tale
Of what we are. In lone and silent
hours,
When night makes a weird sound of its
own stillness,
Like an inspired and desperate alchy-
mist
Staking his very life on some dark hope,
Have I mixed awful talk and asking
looks
With my most innocent love, until
strange tears
Uniting with those breathless kisses,
made
Such magic as compels the charmed
night
To render up thy charge : . . . and,
though ne'er yet
Thou hast unveiled thy inmost sanc-
tuary,
Enough from incommunicable dream,
And twilight phantasms, and deep noon-
day thought,
Has shone within me, that serenely now
And moveless, as a long-forgotten lyre
Suspended in the solitary dome
Of some mysterious and deserted fane,
I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that
my strain

May modulate with murmurs of the air,
And motions of the forests and the sea,
And voice of living beings, and woven
hymns
Of night and day, and the deep heart of
man.

There was a Poet whose untimely
tomb
No human hands with pious reverence
reared,
But the charmed eddies of autumnal
winds
Built o'er his mouldering bones a pyra-
mid
Of mouldering leaves in the waste
wilderness :—
A lovely youth,—no mourning maiden
decked
With weeping flowers, or votive cypress
wreath,
The lone couch of his everlasting
sleep :—
Gentle, and brave, and generous,—no
lorn bard
Breathed o'er his dark fate one melo-
dious sigh :
He lived, he died, he sung, in solitude.
Strangers have wept to hear his passion-
ate notes,
And virgins, as unknown he passed, have
pined
And wasted for fond love of his wild
eyes.
The fire of those soft orbs has ceased to
burn,
And Silence, too enamored of that voice,
Locks its mute music in her rugged cell.

By solemn vision, and bright silver
dream,
His infancy was nurtured. Every sight
And sound from the vast earth and
ambient air
Sent to his heart its choicest impulses,
The fountains of divine philosophy
Fled not his thirsting lips, and all of
great,
Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past
In truth or fable consecrates, he felt
And knew. When early youth had
pass'd, he left
His cold fireside and alienated home
To seek strange truths in undiscovered
lands.
Many a wide waste and tangled wilder-
ness
Has lured his fearless steps ; and he has
bought

With his sweet voice and eyes, from
 savage men,
 His rest and food. Nature's most secret
 steps
 He like her shadow has pursued, where'er
 The red volcano overcanopies
 Its fields of snow and pinnacles of ice
 With burning smoke, or where bitumen
 lakes
 On black bare pointed islets ever beat
 With sluggish surge, or where the secret
 caves
 Rugged and dark, winding among the
 springs
 Of fire and poison, inaccessible
 To avarice or pride, their starry domes
 Of diamond and of gold expand above
 Numberless and immeasurable halls,
 Frequent with crystal column, and clear
 shrines
 Of pearl, and thrones radiant with chrys-
 olite.
 Nor had that scene of ampler majesty
 Than gems or gold, the varying roof of
 heaven
 And the green earth lost in his heart its
 claims
 To love and wonder; he would linger
 long
 In lonesome vales, making the wild his
 home,
 Until the doves and squirrels would
 partake
 From his innocuous hand his bloodless
 food,
 Lured by the gentle meaning of his
 looks,
 And the wild antelope, that starts
 where'er
 The dry leaf rustles in the brake, suspend
 Her timid steps to gaze upon a form
 More graceful than her own.
 His wandering step
 Obedient to high thoughts, has visited
 The awful ruins of the days of old:
 Athens, and Tyre, and Balbec, and the
 waste
 Where stood Jerusalem, the fallen towers
 Of Babylon, the eternal pyramids,
 Memphis and Thebes, and whatsoe'er of
 strange
 Sculptured on alabaster obelisk,
 Or jasper tomb, or mutilated sphynx,
 Dark Æthiopia in her desert hills
 Conceals. Among the ruined temples
 there,
 Stupendous columns, and wild images
 Of more than man, where marble
 demons watch

The Zodiac's brazen mystery, and dead
 men
 Hang their mute thoughts on the mute
 walls around,
 He lingered, poring on memorials
 Of the world's youth, through the long
 burning day
 Gazed on those speechless shapes, nor,
 when the moon
 Filled the mysterious halls with floating
 shades
 Suspended he that task, but ever gazed
 And gazed, till meaning on his vacant
 mind
 Flashed like strong inspiration, and he
 saw
 The thrilling secrets of the birth of
 time.
 Meanwhile an Arab maiden brought his
 food,
 Her daily portion, from her father's tent,
 And spread her matting for his couch,
 and stole
 From duties and repose to tend his
 steps:—
 Enamored, yet not daring for deep awe
 To speak her love:—and watched his
 nightly sleep,
 Sleepless herself, to gaze upon his lips
 Parted in slumber, whence the regular
 breath
 Of innocent dreams arose: then, when
 red morn
 Made paler the pale moon, to her cold
 home
 Wildered, and wan, and panting, she
 returned.

The Poet wandering on, through
 Arabie
 And Persia, and the wild Carmanian
 waste,
 And o'er the aerial mountains which
 pour down
 Indus and Oxus from their icy caves,
 In joy and exultation held his way;
 Till in the vale of Cashmire, far within
 Its loneliest dell, where odorous plants
 entwine
 Beneath the hollow rocks a natural
 bower,
 Beside a sparkling rivulet he stretched
 His languid limbs. A vision on his sleep
 There came, a dream of hopes that never
 yet
 Had flushed his cheek. He dreamed a
 veiled maid
 Sate near him, talking in low solemn
 tones.

Her voice was like the voice of his own
 soul
 Heard in the calm of thought; its music
 long,
 Like woven sounds of streams and
 breezes, held
 His inmost sense suspended in its web
 Of many-colored woof and shifting
 hues.
 Knowledge and truth and virtue were
 her theme,
 And lofty hopes of divine liberty,
 Thoughts the most dear to him, and
 poesy,
 Herself a poet. Soon the solemn mood
 Of her pure mind kindled through all her
 frame
 A permeating fire: wild numbers then
 She raised, with voice stifled in tremu-
 lous sobs
 Subdued by its own pathos: her fair
 hands
 Were bare alone, sweeping from some
 strange harp
 Strange symphony, and in their branch-
 ing veins
 The eloquent blood told an ineffable tale.
 The beating of her heart was heard to fill
 The pauses of her music, and her breath
 Tumultuously accorded with those fits
 Of intermitted song. Sudden she rose,
 As if her heart impatiently endured
 Its bursting burthen: at the sound he
 turned,
 And saw by the warm light of their own
 life
 Her glowing limbs beneath the sinuous
 veil
 Of woven wind, her outspread arms now
 bare,
 Her dark locks floating in the breath of
 night,
 Her beamy bending eyes, her parted lips
 Outstretched, and pale, and quivering
 eagerly.
 His strong heart sunk and sickened with
 excess
 Of love. He reared his shuddering limbs
 and quelled
 His gasping breath, and spread his arms
 to meet
 Her panting bosom: . . . she drew back
 a while,
 Then, yielding to the irresistible joy,
 With frantic gesture and short breath-
 less cry
 Folded his frame in her dissolving arms.
 Now blackness veiled his dizzy eyes, and
 night

Involved and swallowed up the vision;
 sleep,
 Like a dark flood suspended in its course,
 Rolled back its impulse on his vacant
 brain.

Roused by the shock he started from
 his trance—
 The cold white light of morning, the
 blue moon
 Low in the west, the clear and garish
 hills,
 The distinct valley and the vacant woods,
 Spread round him where he stood.
 Whither have fled
 The hues of heaven that canopied his
 bower
 Of yesternight? The sounds that
 soothed his sleep,
 The mystery and the majesty of Earth,
 The joy, the exultation? His wan eyes
 Gaze on the empty scene as vacantly
 As ocean's moon looks on the moon in
 heaven.
 The spirit of sweet human love has sent
 A vision to the sleep of him who spurned
 Her choicest gifts. He eagerly pursues
 Beyond the realms of dream that fleet-
 ing shade;
 He overleaps the bounds. Alas! alas!
 Were limbs, and breath, and being in-
 tertwined
 Thus treacherously? Lost, lost, for ever
 lost,
 In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep,
 That beautiful shape! Does the dark
 gate of death
 Conduct to thy mysterious paradise,
 O Sleep? Does the bright arch of rain-
 bow clouds,
 And pendent mountains seen in the calm
 lake,
 Lead only to a black and watery depth,
 While death's blue vault, with loathliest
 vapors hung,
 Where every shade which the foul grave
 exhales
 Hides its dead eye from the detested day,
 Conduct, O Sleep, to thy delightful
 realms?
 This doubt with sudden tide flowed on
 his heart;
 The insatiate hope which it awakened
 stung
 His brain even like despair.
 While daylight held
 The sky, the Poet kept mute conference
 With his still soul. At night the pas-
 sion came,

Like the fierce fiend of a distempered dream
 And shook him from his rest, and led him forth
 Into the darkness.—As an eagle, grasped
 In folds of the green serpent, feels her breast
 Burn with the poison, and precipitates
 Through night and day, tempest, and calm, and cloud,
 Frantic with dizzying anguish, her blind flight
 O'er the wide æry wilderness: thus driven
 By the bright shadow of that lovely dream,
 Beneath the cold glare of the desolate night,
 Through tangled swamps and deep precipitous dells,
 Startling with careless step the moon-light snake,
 He fled. Red morning dawned upon his flight,
 Shedding the mockery of its vital hues
 Upon his cheek of death. He wandered on
 Till vast Aornos seen from Petra's steep,
 Hung o'er the low horizon like a cloud;
 Through Balk, and where the desolated tombs
 Of Parthian kings scatter to every wind
 Their wasting dust, wildly he wandered on,
 Day after day, a weary waste of hours,
 Bearing within his life the brooding care
 That ever fed on its decaying flame.
 And now his limbs were lean; his scattered hair
 Sere'd by the autumn of strange suffering
 Sung dirges in the wind; his listless hand
 Hung like dead bone within its withered skin;
 Life, and the lustre that consumed it, shone
 As in a furnace burning secretly
 From his dark eyes alone. The cottagers,
 Who ministered with human charity
 His human wants, beheld with wondering awe
 Their fleeting visitant. The mountaineer,
 Encountering on some dizzy precipice
 That spectral form, deemed that the Spirit of wind

With lightning eyes, and eager breath, and feet
 Disturbing not the drifted snow, had paused
 In its career: the infant would conceal
 His troubled visage in his mother's robe
 In terror at the glare of those wild eyes,
 To remember their strange light in many a dream
 Of after-times; but youthful maidens, taught
 By nature, would interpret half the woe
 That wasted him, would call him with false names
 Brother, and friend, would press his pallid hand
 At parting, and watch, dim through tears, the path
 Of his departure from their father's door.

At length upon the lone Chorasman shore
 He paused, a wide and melancholy waste
 Of putrid marshes. A strong impulse urged
 His steps to the sea-shore. A swan was there,
 Beside a sluggish stream among the reeds.
 It rose as he approached, and with strong wings
 Scaling the upward sky, bent its bright course
 High over the immeasurable main.
 His eyes pursued its flight. —“Thou hast a home,
 Beautiful bird; thou voyagest to thine home,
 Where thy sweet mate will twine her downy neck
 With thine, and welcome thy return with eyes
 Bright in the lustre of their own fond joy.
 And what am I that I should linger here,
 With voice far sweeter than thy dying notes,
 Spirit more vast than thine, frame more attuned
 To beauty, wasting these surpassing powers
 In the deaf air, to the blind earth, and heaven
 That echoes not my thoughts?” A gloomy smile
 Of desperate hope wrinkled his quivering lips.

For sleep, he knew, kept most relentlessly
 Its precious charge, and silent death
 exposed,
 Faithless perhaps as sleep, a shadowy
 lure,
 With doubtful smile mocking its own
 strange charms.

Startled by his own thoughts he
 looked around.
 There was no fair fiend near him, not a
 sight
 Or sound of awe but in his own deep
 mind.
 A little shallop floating near the shore
 Caught the impatient wandering of his
 gaze.
 It had been long abandoned, for its sides
 Gaped wide with many a rift, and its
 frail joints
 Swayed with the undulations of the tide.
 A restless impulse urged him to embark
 And meet lone Death on the drear
 ocean's waste;
 For well he knew that mighty Shadow
 loves
 The slimy caverns of the populous deep.

The day was fair and sunny, sea and
 sky
 Drank its inspiring radiance, and the
 wind
 Swept strongly from the shore, blacken-
 ing the waves.
 Following his eager soul, the wanderer
 Leaped in the boat, he spread his cloak
 aloft
 On the bare mast, and took his lonely
 seat,
 And felt the boat speed o'er the tran-
 quil sea
 Like a torn cloud before the hurricane.

As one that in a silver vision floats
 Obedient to the sweep of odorous winds
 Upon resplendent clouds, so rapidly
 Along the dark and ruffled waters fled
 The straining boat.—A whirlwind swept
 it on,
 With fierce gusts and precipitating force,
 Through the white ridges of the chafed
 sea.
 The waves arose. Higher and higher
 still
 Their fierce necks writhed beneath the
 tempest's scourge
 Like serpents struggling in a vulture's
 grasp.

Calm and rejoicing in the fearful war
 Of wave ruining on wave, and blast on
 blast

Descending, and black flood on whirl-
 pool driven

With dark obliterating course, he sate :
 As if their genii were the ministers
 Appointed to conduct him to the light
 Of those beloved eyes, the Poet sate
 Holding the steady helm. Evening
 came on,

The beams of sunset hung their rain-
 bow hues

High 'mid the shifting domes of sheeted
 spray

That canopied his path o'er the waste
 deep;

Twilight, ascending slowly from the
 east,

Entwined in duskier wreaths her braided
 locks

O'er the fair front and radiant eyes of
 day;

Night followed, clad with stars. On
 every side

More horribly the multitudinous streams
 Of ocean's mountainous waste to mutual
 war

Rushed in dark tumult thundering, as
 to mock

The calm and spangled sky. The little
 boat

Still fled before the storm; still fled,
 like foam

Down the steep cataract of a wintry
 river;

Now pausing on the edge of the riven
 wave;

Now leaving far behind the bursting
 mass

That fell, convulsing ocean. Safely
 fled—

As if that frail and wasted human form,
 Had been an elemental god.

At midnight
 The moon arose: and lo! the ethereal
 cliffs

Of Caucasus, whose icy summits shone
 Among the stars like sunlight, and
 around

Whose caverned base the whirlpools
 and the waves

Bursting and eddying irresistibly
 Rage and resound for ever.—Who shall
 save?—

The boat fled on,—the boiling torrent
 drove,—

The crags closed round with black and
 jagged arms,

The shattered mountains overhung the
 sea,
 And faster still, beyond all human speed,
 Suspended on the sweep of the smooth
 wave,
 The little boat was driven. A cavern
 there
 Yawned, and amid its slant and wind-
 ing depths
 Ingulfed the rushing sea. The boat fled
 on
 With unrelaxing speed.—“Vision and
 Love!”
 The Poet cried aloud, “I have beheld
 The path of thy departure. Sleep and
 death
 Shall not divide us long!”

The boat pursued
 The windings of the cavern. Daylight
 shone
 At length upon that gloomy river's flow;
 Now, where the fiercest war among the
 waves
 Is calm, on the unfathomable stream
 The boat moved slowly. Where the
 mountain, riven,
 Exposed those black depths to the azure
 sky,
 Ere yet the flood's enormous volume fell
 Even to the base of Caucasus, with sound
 That shook the everlasting rocks, the
 mass
 Filled with one whirlpool all that ample
 chasm;
 Stair above stair the eddying water rose,
 Circling immeasurably fast, and laved
 With alternating dash the gnarled roots
 Of mighty trees, that stretched their
 giant arms
 In darkness over it. In the midst was left,
 Reflecting, yet distorting every cloud,
 A pool of treacherous and tremendous
 calm.
 Seized by the sway of the ascending
 stream,
 With dizzy swiftness, round, and round,
 and round,
 Ridge after ridge the straining boat
 arose,
 Till on the verge of the extremest curve,
 Where, through an opening of the rocky
 bank,
 The waters overflow, and a smooth spot
 Of glassy quiet mid those battling tides
 Is left, the boat paused shuddering.—
 Shall it sink
 Down the abyss? Shall the reverting
 stress
 Of that resistless gulf embosom it?

Now shall it fall?—A wandering stream
 of wind,
 Breathed from the west, has caught the
 expanded sail,
 And, lo! with gentle motion, between
 banks
 Of mossy slope, and on a placid stream,
 Beneath a woven grove it sails, and hark!
 The ghastly torrent mingles its far roar,
 With the breeze murmuring in the
 musical woods.
 Where the embowering trees recede,
 and leave
 A little space of green expanse, the cove
 Is closed by meeting banks, whose
 yellow flowers
 For ever gaze on their own drooping eyes,
 Reflected in the crystal calm. The wave
 Of the boat's motion marred their pen-
 sive task,
 Which nought but vagrant bird, or
 wanton wind,
 Or falling spear-grass, or their own
 decay
 Had e'er disturbed before. The Poet
 longed
 To deck with their bright hues his with-
 ered hair,
 But on his heart its solitude returned,
 And he forebore. Not the strong impulse
 hid
 In those flushed cheeks, bent eyes, and
 shadowy frame
 Had yet performed its ministry: it hung
 Upon his life, as lightning in a cloud
 Gleams, hovering ere it vanish, ere the
 floods
 Of night close over it.

The noonday sun
 Now shone upon the forest, one vast
 mass
 Of mingling shade, whose brown mag-
 nificence
 A narrow vale embosoms. There, huge
 caves,
 Scooped in the dark base of their airy
 rocks
 Mocking its moans, respond and roar for
 ever,
 The meeting boughs and implicated
 leaves
 Wove twilight o'er the Poet's path, as led
 By love, or dream, or god, or mightier
 Death,
 He sought in Nature's dearest haunt,
 some bank,
 Her cradle, and his sepulchre. More dark
 And dark the shades accumulata. The
 oak.

Expanding its immense and knotty arms,
 Embraces the light beech. The pyramids
 Of the tall cedar overarching frame
 Most solemn domes within, and far below,
 Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,
 The ash and the acacia floating hang
 Tremulous and pale. Like restless serpents, clothed
 In rainbow and in fire, the parasites,
 Starred with ten thousand blossoms, flow around
 The gray trunks, and, as gamesome infants' eyes,
 With gentle meanings, and most innocent wiles,
 Fold their beams round the hearts of those that love,
 These twine their tendrils with the wedded boughs
 Uniting their close union; the woven leaves
 Make network of the dark blue light of day,
 And the night's noontide clearness, mutable
 As shapes in the weird clouds. Soft mossy lawns
 Beneath these canopies extend their swells,
 Fragrant with perfumed herbs, and eyed with blooms
 Minute yet beautiful. One darkest glen
 Sends from its woods of musk-rose, twined with jasmine,
 A soul-dissolving odor, to invite
 To some more lovely mystery. Through the dell,
 Silence and Twilight here, twin-sisters, keep
 Their noonday watch, and sail among the shades,
 Like vaporous shapes half seen; beyond, a well,
 Dark, gleaming, and of most translucent wave,
 Images all the woven boughs above,
 And each depending leaf, and every speck
 Of azure sky, darting between their chasms;
 Nor aught else in the liquid mirror laves
 Its portraiture, but some inconstant star
 Between one foliaged lattice twinkling fair,
 Or painted bird, sleeping beneath the moon,
 Or gorgeous insect floating motionless,

Unconscious of the day, ere yet his wings
 Have spread their glories to the gaze of noon.

Hither the Poet came. His eyes beheld
 Their own wan light through the reflected lines
 Of his thin hair, distinct in the dark depth
 Of that still fountain; as the human heart,
 Gazing in dreams over the gloomy grave,
 Sees its own treacherous likeness there.
 He heard
 The motion of the leaves, the grass that sprung
 Startled and glanced and trembled even to feel
 An unaccustomed presence, and the sound
 Of the sweet brook that from the secret springs
 Of that dark fountain rose. A Spirit seemed
 To stand beside him—clothed in no bright robes
 Of shadowy silver or enshrining light,
 Borrowed from aught the visible world affords
 Of grace, or majesty, or mystery;—
 But undulating woods, and silent well,
 And leaping rivulet, and evening gloom
 Now deepening the dark shades, for speech assuming,
 Held commune with him, as if he and it
 Were all that was,—only . . . when his regard
 Was raised by intense pensiveness, . . . two eyes,
 Two starry eyes, hung in the gloom of thought,
 And seemed with their serene and azure smiles
 To beckon him.

Obedient to the light
 That shone within his soul, he went,
 pursuing
 The windings of the dell.—The rivulet
 Wanton and wild, through many a green ravine
 Beneath the forest flowed. Sometimes it fell
 Among the moss with hollow harmony
 Dark and profound. Now on the polished stones
 It danced; like childhood laughing as it went:

Beside the grassy shore
Of the small stream he went; he did
impress
On the green moss his tremulous step,
that caught
Strong shuddering from his burning
limbs. As one
Roused by some joyous madness from
the couch
Of fever, he did move; yet not like him
Forgetful of the grave, where, when
the flame
Of his frail exultation shall be spent,
He must descend. With rapid steps he
went
Beneath the shade of trees, beside the
flow
Of the wild babbling rivulet; and now
The forest's solemn canopies were
changed
For the uniform and lightsome evening
sky.
Gray rocks did peep from the spare moss,
and stemmed
The struggling brook: tall spires of
windlestrae
Threw their thin shadows down the
rugged slope,
And nought but gnarled roots of ancient
pines
Barless and blasted, clenched with
grasping roots
The unwilling soil. A gradual change
was here,

Yet ghastly. For, as fast years flow
away,
The smooth brow gathers, and the hair
grows thin
And white, and where irradiate dewy
eyes
Had shone, gleam stony orbs :—so from
his steps
Bright flowers departed, and the beautiful
shade
Of the green groves, with all their odor-
ous winds
And musical motions. Calm, he still
pursued
The stream, that with a larger volume
now
Rolled through the labyrinthine dell,
and there
Fretted a path through its descending
curves
With its wintry speed. On every side
now rose
Rocks, which, in unimaginable forms,
Lifted their black and barren pinnacles
In the light of evening, and, its precipice
Obscuring the ravine, disclosed above,
Mid topping stones, black gulfs and
yawning caves,
Whose windings gave ten thousand
various tongues
To the loud stream. Lo! where the pass
expands
Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain
breaks,
And seems, with its accumulated crags,
To overhang the world : for wide expand
Beneath the wan stars and descending
moon
Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty
streams,
Dim tracts and vast, robed in the
lustrous gloom
Of leaden-colored even, and fiery hills
Mingling their flames with twilight, on
the verge
Of the remote horizon. The near scene,
In naked and severe simplicity,
Made contrast with the universe. A
pine,
Rock-rooted, stretched athwart the
vacancy
Its swinging boughs, to each inconstant
blast
Yielding one only response, at each pause
In most familiar cadence, with the howl
The thunder and the hiss of homeless
streams
Mingling its solemn song, whilst the
broad river.

Foaming and hurrying o'er its rugged
path,
Fell into that immeasurable void
Scattering its waters to the passing
winds.

Yet the gray precipice and solemn
pine
And torrent were not all;—one silent
nook
Was there. Even on the edge of that
vast mountain,
Upheld by knotty roots and fallen rocks,
It overlooked in its serenity
The dark earth, and the bending vault
of stars.
It was a tranquil spot, that seemed to
smile
Even in the lap of horror. Ivy clasped
The fissured stones with its entwining
arms,
And did embower with leaves for ever
green,
And berries dark, the smooth and even
space
Of its inviolated floor, and here
The children of the autumnal whirlwind
bore,
In wanton sport, those bright leaves,
whose decay,
Red, yellow, or ethereally pale,
Rivals the pride of summer. 'Tis the
haunt
Of every gentle wind, whose breath can
teach
The wilds to love tranquillity. One
step,
One human step alone, has ever broken
The stillness of its solitude:—one voice
Alone inspired its echoes;—even that
voice
Which hither came, floating among the
winds,
And led the loveliest among human
forms
To make their wild haunts the depository
Of all the grace and beauty that endured
Its motions, render up its majesty,
Scatter its music on the unfeeling
storm,
And to the damp leaves and blue cavern
mould,
Nurses of rainbow flowers and branch-
ing moss,
Commit the colors of that varying
cheek,
That snowy breast, those dark and
drooping eyes.

The dim and hornèd moon hung low,
and poured
A sea of lustre on the horizon's verge
That overflowed its mountains. Yellow
mist
Filled the unbounded atmosphere, and
drank
Wan moonlight even to fulness: not a
star
Shone, not a sound was heard; the very
winds,
Danger's grim playmates, on that preci-
pice
Slept, clasped in his embrace.—O, storm
of death!
Whose sightless speed divides this sullen
night:
And thou, colossal Skeleton, that, still
Guiding its irresistible career
In thy devastating omnipotence,
Art king of this frail world, from the
red field
Of slaughter, from the reeking hos-
pital,
The patriot's sacred couch, the snowy
bed
Of innocence, the scaffold and the
throne,
A mighty voice invokes thee. Ruin
calls
His brother Death. A rare and regal
prey
He hath prepared, prowling around the
world;
Glutted with which thou mayst repose,
and men
Go to their graves like flowers or creep-
ing worms,
Nor ever more offer at thy dark shrine
The unheeded tribute of a broken heart.

When on the threshold of the green
recess
The wanderer's footsteps fell, he knew
that death
Was on him. Yet a little, ere it fled,
Did he resign his high and holy soul
To images of the majestic past,
That paused within his passive being
now,
Like winds that bear sweet music, when
they breathe
Through some dim latticed chamber.
He did place
His pale lean hand upon the rugged
trunk
Of the old pine. Upon an ivied stone
Reclined his languid head, his limbs did
rest,

Diffused and motionless, on the smooth
 brink
 Of that obscurest chasm ;—and thus he
 lay,
 Surrendering to their final impulses
 The hovering powers of life. Hope and
 despair,
 The torturers, slept ; no mortal pain or
 fear
 Marred his repose, the influxes of sense,
 And his own being unalloyed by pain,
 Yet feebler and more feeble, calmly fed
 The stream of thought, till he lay breath-
 ing there
 At peace, and faintly smiling :—his last
 sight
 Was the great moon, which o'er the
 western line
 Of the wide world her mighty horn sus-
 pended,
 With whose dun beams inwoven dark-
 ness seemed
 To mingle. Now upon the jagged hills
 It rests, and still as the divided frame
 Of the vast meteor sunk, the Poet's blood,
 That ever beat in mystic sympathy
 With nature's ebb and flow, grew feebler
 still :
 And when two lessening points of light
 alone
 Gleaned through the darkness, the alter-
 nate gasp
 Of his faint respiration scarce did stir
 The stagnate night :—till the minutest
 ray
 Was quenched, the pulse yet lingered in
 his heart.
 It paused—it fluttered. But when
 heaven remained
 Utterly black, the murky shades in-
 volved
 An image, silent, cold, and motionless,
 As their own voiceless earth and vacant
 air.
 Even as a vapor fed with golden beams
 That ministered on sunlight, ere the west
 Eclipses it, was now that wondrous
 frame—
 No sense, no motion, no divinity—
 A fragile lute, on whose harmonious
 strings
 The breath of heaven did wander—a
 bright stream
 Once fed with many-voicèd waves—a
 dream
 Of youth, which night and time have
 quenched forever,
 Still, dark, and dry, and unremembered
 now.

O, for Medea's wondrous alchemy,
 Which wheresoe'er it fell made the earth
 gleam
 With bright flowers, and the wintry
 boughs exhale
 From vernal blooms fresh fragrance !
 O, that God,
 Profuse of poisons, would concede the
 chalice
 Which but one living man has drained,
 who now
 Vessel of deathless wrath, a slave that
 feels
 No proud exemption in the blighting
 curse
 He bears, over the world wanders for
 ever,
 Lone as incarnate death ! O, that the
 dream
 Of dark magician in his visioned cave,
 Raking the cinders of a crucible
 For life and power, even when his feeble
 hand
 Shakes in its last decay, were the true
 law
 Of this so lovely world ! But thou art
 fled
 Like some frail exhalation ; which the
 dawn
 Robes in its golden beams,—ah ! thou
 hast fled !
 The brave, the gentle, and the beautiful,
 The child of grace and genius. Heart-
 less things
 Are done and said i' the world, and
 many worms
 And beasts and men live on, and mighty
 Earth
 From sea and mountain, city and wilder-
 ness,
 In vespèr low or joyous orison,
 Lifts still its solemn voice :—but thou
 art fled—
 Thou canst no longer know or love the
 shapes
 Of this phantasmal scene, who have to
 thee
 Been purest ministers, who are, alas !
 Now thou art not. Upon those pallid
 lips
 So sweet even in their silence, on those
 eyes
 That image sleep in death, upon that
 form
 Yet safe from the worm's outrage, let
 no tear
 Be shed—not even in thought. Nor,
 when those hues
 Are gone, and those divinest lineaments

Worn by the senseless wind, shall live
 alone
 In the frail pauses of this simple strain,
 Let not high verse, mourning the
 memory
 Of that which is no more, or painting's
 woe
 Or sculpture, speak in feeble imagery
 Their own cold powers. Art and elo-
 quence,
 And all the shows o' the world are frail
 and vain
 To weep a loss that turns their lights to
 shade.
 It is a woe too "dear for tears," when
 all
 Is left at once, when some surpassing
 Spirit,
 Whose light adorned the world around
 it, leaves
 Those who remain behind, not sobs or
 groans,
 The passionate tumult of a clinging hope;
 But pale despair and cold tranquillity,
 Nature's vast frame, the web of human
 things,
 Birth and the grave, that are not as they
 were.¹ 1815. March, 1816.

¹None of Shelley's poems is more character-
 istic than this. The solemn spirit that reigns
 throughout, the worship of the majesty of na-
 ture, the broodings of a poet's heart in solitude
 —the mingling of the exulting joy which the
 various aspects of the visible universe inspires
 with the sad and struggling pangs which human
 passion imparts—give a touching interest to the
 whole. The death which he had often contem-
 plated during the last months as certain and
 near he here represented in such colors as had,
 in his lonely musings, soothed his soul to peace.
 The versification sustains the solemn spirit
 which breathes throughout: it is peculiarly
 melodious. The poem ought rather to be con-
 sidered didactic than narrative; it was the out-
 pouring of his own emotions, embodied in the
 purest form he could conceive, painted in the
 ideal hues which his brilliant imagination in-
 spired, and softened by the recent anticipation
 of death. (*Mrs. Shelley's note.*)

The deeper meaning of *Alastor* is to be found,
 not in the thought of death nor in the poet's
 recent communings with nature, but in the
 motto from St. Augustine placed upon its title-
 page, and in the *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*,
 composed about a year later. Enamored of
 ideal loveliness, the poet pursues his vision
 through the universe, vainly hoping to assuage
 the thirst which has been stimulated in his
 spirit, and vainly longing for some mortal real-
 ization of his love. *Alastor*, like *Epipsychidion*,
 reveals the mistake which Shelley made in
 thinking that the idea of beauty could become
 incarnate for him in any earthly form: while
 the *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty* recognizes the
 truth that such realization of the ideal is im-
 possible. The very last letter written by Shelley
 sets the misconception in its proper light: "I
 think one is always in love with something or

HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY

I

THE awful shadow of some unseen Power
 Floats tho' unseen amongst us,—
 visiting
 This various world with as inconstant
 wing
 As summer winds that creep from flower
 to flower,—
 Like moonbeams that behind some piny
 mountain shower,
 It visits with inconstant glance
 Each human heart and countenance;
 Like hues and harmonies of evening,—
 Like clouds in starlight widely
 spread,—
 Like memory of music fled,—
 Like aught that for its grace may be
 Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

II

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate
 With thine own hues all thou dost
 shine upon
 Of human thought or form,—where
 art thou gone?
 Why dost thou pass away and leave our
 state,
 This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and
 desolate?
 Ask why the sunlight not for ever
 Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain
 river,
 Why aught should fail and fade that
 once is shown,
 Why fear and dream and death and
 birth
 Cast on the daylight of this earth
 Such gloom,—why man has such a
 scope
 For love and hate, despondency and
 hope?

III

No voice from some sublimer world hath
 ever
 To sage or poet these responses
 given—
 Therefore the names of Demon,
 Ghost, and Heaven,

other; the error, and I confess it is not easy for
 spirits cased in flesh and blood to avoid it, con-
 sists in seeking in a mortal image the likeness of
 what is, perhaps, eternal." But this Shelley
 discovered only with "the years that bring the
 philosophic mind," and when he was upon the
 very verge of his untimely death. (*Life of Shelley.*)

Remain the records of their vain endeavor,
 Frail spells—whose uttered charm might
 not avail to sever,
 From all we hear and all we see,
 Doubt, chance, and mutability.
 Thy light alone—like mist o'er mountains driven,
 Or music by the night wind sent,
 Thro' strings of some still instrument,
 Or moonlight on a midnight stream,
 Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

IV

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds depart
 And come, for some uncertain moments lent.
 Man were immortal, and omnipotent,
 Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou art,
 Keep with thy glorious train firm state within his heart.
 Thou messenger of sympathies,
 That wax and wane in lovers' eyes—
 Thou—that to human thought art nourishment,
 Like darkness to a dying flame!
 Depart not as thy shadow came,
 Depart not—lest the grave should be,
 'ike life and fear, a dark reality.

V

While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped
 Thro' many a listening chamber, cave and ruin,
 And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
 Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.
 I called on poisonous names with which
 our youth is fed;
 I was not heard—I saw them not—
 When musing deeply on the lot
 Of life, at the sweet time when winds are wooing
 All vital things that wake to bring
 News of birds and blossoming,—
 Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
 I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!

VI

I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
 To thee and thine—have I not kept the vow?

With beating heart and streaming eyes, even now
 I call the phantoms of a thousand hours
 Each from his voiceless grave: they have in visioned bowers
 Of studious zeal or love's delight
 Outwatched with me the envious night—
 They know that never joy illumed my brow
 Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst free
 This world from its dark slavery,
 That thou—O awful LOVELINESS,
 Wouldst give whate'er these words cannot express.

VII

The day becomes more solemn and serene
 When noon is past—there is a harmony
 In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,
 Which thro' the summer is not heard or seen,
 As if it could not be, as if it had not been!
 Thus let thy power, which like the truth
 Of nature on my passive youth
 Descended, to my onward life supply
 Its calm—to one who worships thee,
 And every form containing thee,
 Whom, SPIRIT fair, thy spells did bind
 To fear himself, and love all human kind
 1816. 1817

MONT BLANC¹LINES WRITTEN IN THE VALE OF
CHAMOUNI

THE everlasting universe of things
 Flows through the mind, and rolls its rapid waves,

¹ *Mont Blanc* was inspired by a view of that mountain and its surrounding peaks and valleys, as he lingered on the Bridge of Arve on his way through the Valley of Chamouni. Shelley makes the following mention of this poem in his publication of the *History of a Six Weeks' Tour, and Letters from Switzerland*: "The poem entitled *Mont Blanc* is written by the author of the two letters from Chamouni and Vevai. It was composed under the immediate impression of the deep and powerful feelings excited by the objects which it attempts to describe; and, as an undisciplined overflowing of the soul, rests its claim to approbation on an attempt to imitate the untamable wildness and inaccessible solemnity from which those feelings sprang." (From Mrs. Shelley's *Note on the Poems of 1816.*) Compare Coleridge's Hymn before Sunrise in

Now dark—now glittering—now reflecting gloom—

Now lending splendor, where from secret springs

The source of human thought its tribute brings

Of waters,—with a sound but half its own,

Such as a feeble brook will oft assume
In the wild woods, among the mountains lone,

Where waterfalls around it leap for ever,
Where woods and winds contend, and a vast river

Over its rocks ceaselessly bursts and raves.

Thus thou, Ravine of Arve—dark, deep Ravine—

Thou many-colored, many-voicèd vale,
Over whose pines, and crags, and caverns sail

Fast cloud shadows and sunbeams :
awful scene,

Where Power in likeness of the Arve comes down

From the ice gulfs that gird his secret throne,

Bursting through these dark mountains like the flame

Of lightning thro' the tempest ;—thou dost lie,

Thy giant brood of pines around thee clinging,

Children of elder time, in whose devotion
The chainless winds still come and ever came

To drink their odors, and their mighty swinging

To hear—an old and solemn harmony ;
Thine earthly rainbows stretched across the sweep

Of the ethereal waterfall, whose veil
Robes some unsculptured image ; the strange sleep

Which when the voices of the desert fail
Wraps all in its own deep eternity ;—

Thy caverns echoing to the Arve's commotion,

A loud, lone sound no other sound can tame ;

Thou art pervaded with that ceaseless motion,

Thou art the path of that unresting sound—

Dizzy Ravine ! and when I gaze on thee
I seem as in a trance sublime and strange
To muse on my own separate phantasy,
My own, my human mind, which passively

Now renders and receives fast influences,

Holding an unremitting interchange
With the clear universe of things around ;

One legion of wild thoughts, whose wandering wings

Now float above thy darkness, and now rest

Where that or thou art no unbidden guest,

In the still cave of the witch Poesy,
Seeking among the shadows that pass by

Ghosts of all things that are, some shade of thee,

Some phantom, some faint image ; till the breast

From which they fled recalls them, thou art there !

Some say that gleams of a remoter world
Visit the soul in sleep,—that death is slumber,

And that its shapes the busy thoughts outnumber

Of those who wake and live.—I look on high ;

Has some unknown omnipotence unfurled

The veil of life and death ? or do I lie
In dream, and does the mightier world

of sleep

Spread far around and inaccessibly
Its circles ? For the very spirit fails,

Driven like a homeless cloud from steep to steep

That vanishes among the viewless gales !
Far, far above, piercing the infinite sky,

Mont Blanc appears,—still, snowy, and serene—

Its subject mountains their unearthly forms

Pile around it, ice and rock ; broad vales between

Of frozen floods, unfathomable deeps,
Blue as the overhanging heaven, that spread

And wind among the accumulated steeps ;

A desert peopled by the storms alone,
Save when the eagle brings some hunter's bone,

And the wolf tracks her there—how hideously

the Vale of Chamouni (p. 96). Coleridge had never been in the Vale of Chamouni, and drew the suggestion and part of the substance of his Hymn from a poem by Frederike Brun.

Its shapes are heaped around! rude,
bare, and high,
Ghastly, and scarred, and riven.—Is this
the scene
Where the old Earthquake-demon
taught her young
Ruin? Were these their toys? or did
a sea

Of fire envelope once this silent snow?
None can reply—all seems eternal now.
The wilderness has a mysterious tongue
Which teaches awful doubt, or faith so
mild,

So solemn, so serene, that man may be
But for such faith with nature re-
conciled;

Thou hast a voice, great Mountain, to
repeal

Large codes of fraud and woe; not
understood

By all, but which the wise, and great,
and good

Interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel.

The fields, the lakes, the forests, and the
streams,

Ocean, and all the living things that
dwell

Within the dædal earth; lightning and
rain,

Earthquake, and fiery flood, and hurri-
cane,

The torpor of the year when feeble
dreams

Visit the hidden buds, or dreamless sleep
Holds every future leaf and flower;—
the bound

With which from that detested trance
they leap;

The works and ways of man, their death
and birth,

And that of him and all that his may be;
All things that move and breathe with
toil and sound

Are born and die; revolve, subside and
swell.

Power dwells apart in its tranquillity
Remote, serene, and inaccessible:

And *this*, the naked countenance of
earth,

On which I gaze, even these primeval
mountains

Teach the adverting mind. The glaciers
creep

Like snakes that watch their prey, from
their far fountains,

Slow rolling on; there, many a precipice,
Frost and the Sun in scorn of mortal
power

Have piled: dome, pyramid, and pin-
nacle,

A city of death, distinct with many a
tower

And wall impregnable of beaming ice.
Yet not a city, but a flood of ruin

Is there, that from the boundaries of
the sky

Rolls its perpetual stream; vast pines
are strewing

Its destined path, or in the mangled soil
Branchless and shattered stand; the
rocks, drawn down

From yon remotest waste, have over-
thrown

The limits of the dead and living world,
Never to be reclaimed. The dwelling-
place

Of insects, beasts, and birds, becomes
its spoil;

Their food and their retreat for ever
gone,

So much of life and joy is lost. The race
Of man, flies far in dread; his work and
dwelling

Vanish, like smoke before the tempest's
stream,

And their place is not known. Below,
vast caves

Shine in the rushing torrents' restless
gleam,

Which from those secret chasms in
tumult welling

Meet in the vale, and one majestic River,
The breath and blood of distant lands,
for ever

Rolls its loud waters to the ocean waves,
Breathes its swift vapors to the circ-
ling air.

Mont Blanc yet gleams on high:—the
power is there,

The still and solemn power of many
sights,

And many sounds, and much of life and
death.

In the calm darkness of the moonless
nights,

In the lone glare of day, the snows
descend

Upon that Mountain; none beholds
them there,

Nor when the flakes burn in the sinking
sun,

Or the star-beams dart through them:
—Winds contend

Silently there, and heap the snow with
breath

Rapid and strong, but silently! Its home

The voiceless lightning in these solitudes
Keeps innocently, and like vapor broods
Over the snow. The secret strength of
things

Which governs thought, and to the infinite dome

Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee !
And what were thou, and earth, and
stars, and sea,

If to the human mind's imaginings
Silence and solitude were vacancy ?

July 23, 1816. 1817.

TO MARY — — —

DEDICATION OF THE REVOLT OF ISLAM

So now my summer task is ended, Mary,
And I return to thee, mine own heart's
home ;

As to his Queen some victor Knight of
Faëry,

Earning bright spoils for her enchanted dome ;

Nor thou disdain that, ere my fame
become

A star among the stars of mortal night,

If it indeed may cleave its natal gloom,
Its doubtful promise thus I would unite
With thy beloved name, thou Child of
love and light.

The toil which stole from thee so many
an hour

Is ended—and the fruit is at thy feet !
No longer where the woods to frame a
bower

With interlaced branches mix and
meet,

Or where, with sound like many voices
sweet,

Waterfalls leap among wild islands
green

Which framed for my lone boat a
lone retreat

Of moss-grown trees and weeds, shall I
be seen :

But beside thee, where still my heart
has ever been.

Thoughts of great deeds were mine,
dear Friend, when first

The clouds which wrap this world
from youth did pass.

I do remember well the hour which
burst

My spirit's sleep : a fresh Maydawn it
was,

When I walked forth upon the glittering
grass,

And wept, I knew not why : until there
rose

From the near schoolroom voices
that, alas !

Were but one echo from a world of
woes—

The harsh and grating strife of tyrants
and of foes.

And then I clasped my hands, and
looked around,

But none was near to mock my
streaming eyes,

Which poured their warm drops on
the sunny ground—

So, without shame, I spake:—" I will
be wise,

And just, and free, and mild, if in me
lies

Such power, for I grow weary to behold
The selfish and the strong still tyrannize

Without reproach or check." I then
controlled

My tears, my heart grew calm, and I
was meek and bold.

And from that hour did I with earnest
thought

Heap knowledge from forbidden
mines of lore,

Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or
taught

I cared to learn, but from that secret
store

Wrought linked armor for my soul,
before

It might walk forth to war among man-
kind ;

Thus power and hope were strengthened
more and more

Within me, till there came upon my
mind

A sense of loneliness, a thirst with which
I pined.

Alas that love should be a blight and
suaire

To those who seek all sympathies in
one !—

Such once I sought in vain ; then black
despair,

The shadow of a starless night, was
thrown

Over the world in which I moved
alone :

Yet never found I one not false to me,
Hard hearts, and cold, like weights
of icy stone

Which crushed and withered mine,
that could not be
Aught but a lifeless clog, until revived
by thee.

Thou Friend, whose presence on my
wintry heart

Fell, like bright Spring upon some
herbless plain,

How beautiful and calm and free thou
wert

In thy young wisdom, when the
mortal chain

Of Custom thou didst burst and rend
in twain,

And walk as free as light the clouds
among,

Which many an envious slave then
breathed in vain

From his dim dungeon, and my spirit
sprung

To meet thee from the woes which had
begirt it long!

No more alone through the world's
wilderness,

Although I trod the paths of high
intent,

I journeyed now: no more companion-
less,

Where solitude is like despair, I
went.—

There is the wisdom of a stern content
When Poverty can blight the just and
good,

When Infamy dares mock the in-
nocent,

And cherished friends turn with the
multitude

To trample: this was ours, and we un-
shaken stood!

Now has descended a serener hour,

And, with inconstant fortune, friends
return;

Though suffering leaves the knowledge
and the power

Which says "Let scorn be not repaid
with scorn."

And from thy side two gentle babes
are born

To fill our home with smiles, and thus
are we

Most fortunate beneath life's beaming
morn:

And these delights, and thou, have been
to me

The parents of the Song I consecrate to
thee.

Is it that now my inexperienced fingers
But strike the prelude of a loftier
strain?

Or must the lyre on which my spirit
lingers

Soon pause in silence, ne'er to sound
again,

Though it might shake the Anarch
Custom's reign,

And charm the minds of men to Truth's
own sway.

Holier than was Amphion's? I would
fain

Reply in hope—but I am worn away,
And Death and Love are yet contending
for their prey.

And what art thou? I know, but dare
not speak:

Time may interpret to his silent years.
Yet in the paleness of thy thoughtful
cheek,

And in the light thine ample fore-
head wears,

And in thy sweetest smiles, and in
thy tears,

And in thy gentle speech, a prophecy
Is whispered, to subdue my fondest
fears:

And, through thine eyes, even in thy
soul I see

A lamp of vestal fire burning internally.

They say that thou wert lovely from
thy birth,

Of glorious parents, thou aspiring
Child.

I wonder not—for One then left this
earth

Whose life was like a setting planet
mild,

Which clothed thee in the radiance
undefiled

Of its departing glory; still her fame
Shines on thee, through the tempests
dark and wild

Which shake these latter days; and
thou canst claim

The shelter, from thy Sire, of an im-
mortal name.

One voice came forth from many a
mighty spirit

Which was the echo of three-thousand
years:

And the tumultuous world stood mute
to hear it,

As some lone man who in a desert
hears

The music of his home;—unwonted
fears
Fell on the pale oppressors of our race,
And Faith and Custom and low-
thoughted cares,
Like thunder-stricken dragons, for a
space
Left the torn human heart, their food
and dwelling-place.

Truth's deathless voice pauses among
mankind!

If there must be no response to my
cry—
If men must rise and stamp, with fury
blind,

On his pure name who loves them—
thou and I,
Sweet friend! can look from our
tranquillity

Like lamps into the world's tempestuous
night,—

Two tranquil stars, while clouds are
passing by
Which wrap them from the foundering
seaman's sight,

That burn from year to year with unex-
tinguished light.

1817. 1818.

OZYMANDIAS

I MET a traveller from an antique
land

Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs
of stone

Stand in the desert. Near them, on
the sand,

Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose
frown,

And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold
command,

Tell that its sculptor well those passions
read

Which yet survive, stamped on these
lifeless things,

The hand that mocked them and the
heart that fed:

And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of
kings:

Look on my works, ye Mighty, and
despair!"

Nothing beside remains. Round the
decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and
bare

The lone and level sands stretch far
away.

1817. 1818.

ON A FADED VIOLET

THE odor from the flower is gone
Which like thy kisses breathed on me;
The color from the flower is flown
Which glowed of thee and only thee!

A shrivelled, lifeless, vacant form,
It lies on my abandoned breast,
And mocks the heart which yet is warm,
With cold and silent rest.

I weep,—my tears revive it not!
I sigh,—it breathes no more on me;
Its mute and uncomplaining lot
Is such as mine should be.

1818. 1821.

LINES WRITTEN AMONG THE EUGANEAN HILLS

MANY a green isle needs must be
In the deep wide sea of misery,
Or the mariner, worn and wan,
Never thus could voyage on
Day and night, and night and day,
Drifting on his dreary way,
With the solid darkness black
Closing round his vessel's track;
Whilst above the sunless sky,
Big with clouds, hangs heavily,
And behind the tempest fleet
Hurries on with lightning feet,
Riving sail, and cord, and plank,
Till the ship has almost drank
Death from the o'er-brimming deep;
And sinks down, down, like that sleep
When the dreamer seems to be
Weltering through eternity;
And the dim low line before
Of a dark and distant shore
Still recedes, as ever still
Longing with divided will,
But no power to seek or shun,
He is ever drifted on
O'er the unrepousing wave
To the haven of the grave.
What, if there no friends will greet;
What, if there no heart will meet
His with love's impatient beat;
Wander wheresoe'er he may,
Can he dream before that day
To find refuge from distress
In friendship's smile, in love's caress!
Then 'twill wreak him little woe
Whether such there be or no:
Senseless is the breast, and cold,
Which relenting love would fold;
Bloodless are the veins and chill

Which the pulse of pain did fill ;
 Every little living nerve
 That from bitter words did swerve
 Round the tortured lips and brow,
 Are like sapless leaflets now
 Frozen upon December's bough.
 On the beach of a northern sea
 Which tempests shake eternally,
 As once the wretch there lay to sleep,
 Lies a solitary heap,
 One white skull and seven dry bones,
 On the margin of the stones,
 Where a few gray rushes stand,
 Boundaries of the sea and land :
 Nor is heard one voice of wail
 But the sea-mews, as they sail
 O'er the billows of the gale ;
 Or the whirlwind up and down
 Howling, like a slaughtered town,
 When a king in glory rides
 Through the pomp of fratricides :
 Those unburied bones around
 There is many a mournful sound ;
 There is no lament for him,
 Like a sunless vapor, dim,
 Who once clothed with life and thought
 What now moves nor murmurs not.

Ay, many flowering islands lie
 In the waters of wide Agony :
 To such a one this morn was led
 My bark by soft winds piloted :
 'Mid the mountains Euganean
 I stood listening to the pæan,
 With which the legioned rocks did hail
 The sun's uprise majestic ;
 Gathering round with wings all hoar,
 Thro' the dewy mist they soar
 Like gray shades, till the eastern heaven
 Bursts, and then, as clouds of even,
 Flecked with fire and azure, lie
 In the unfathomable sky,
 So their plumes of purple grain,
 Starred with drops of golden rain,
 Glean above the sunlight woods,
 As in silent multitudes
 On the morning's fitful gale
 Thro' the broken mist they sail,
 And the vapors cloven and gleaming
 Follow down the dark steep streaming,
 Till all is bright, and clear, and still,
 Round the solitary hill.

Beneath is spread like a green sea
 The waveless plain of Lombardy,
 Bounded by the vaporous air,
 Islanded by cities fair ;
 Underneath day's azure eyes
 Ocean's nursling, Venice lies,

A peopled labyrinth of walls,
 Amphitrite's destined halls,
 Which her hoary sire now paves
 With his blue and beaming waves.
 Lo ! the sun upsprings behind,
 Broad, red, radiant, half reclined
 On the level quivering line
 Of the waters crystalline ;
 And before that chasm of light,
 As within a furnace bright,
 Column, tower, and dome, and spire,
 Shine like obelisks of fire,
 Pointing with inconstant motion
 From the altar of dark ocean
 To the sapphire-tinted skies ;
 As the flames of sacrifice
 From the marble shrines did rise,
 As to pierce the dome of gold
 Where Apollo spoke of old.

Sun-girt City, thou hast been
 Ocean's child, and then his queen ;
 Now is come a darker day,
 And thou soon must be his prey,
 If the power that raised thee here
 Hallow so thy watery bier.
 A less drear ruin than now,
 With thy conquest-branded brow
 Stopping to the slave of slaves
 From thy throne, among the waves
 Wilt thou be, when the sea-mew
 Flies, as once before it flew,
 O'er thine isles depopulate,
 And all is in its ancient state,
 Save where many a palace gate
 With green sea-flowers overgrown
 Like a rock of ocean's own,
 Topples o'er the abandoned sea
 As the tides change sullenly.
 The fisher on his watery way,
 Wandering at the close of day,
 Will spread his sail and seize his oar
 Till he pass the gloomy shore,
 Lest thy dead should, from their sleep
 Bursting o'er the starlight deep,
 Lead a rapid masque of death
 O'er the waters of his path.

Those who alone thy towers behold
 Quivering through ærial gold,
 As I now behold them here,
 Would imagine not they were
 Sepulchres, where human forms,
 Like pollution-nourished worms
 To the corpse of greatness cling,
 Murdered, and now mouldering :
 But if Freedom should awake
 In her omnipotence, and shake
 From the Celtic Anarch's hold

All the keys of dungeons cold,
 Where a hundred cities lie
 Chained like thee, ingloriously,
 Thou and all thy sister band
 Might adorn this sunny land,
 Twining memories of old time
 With new virtues more sublime;
 If not, perish thou and they,
 Clouds which stain truth's rising day
 By her sun consumed away,
 Earth can spare ye: while like flowers,
 In the waste of years and hours,
 From your dust new nations spring
 With more kindly blossoming.
 Perish—let there only be
 Floating o'er thy heartless sea
 As the garment of thy sky
 Clothes the world immortally,
 One remembrance, more sublime
 Than the tattered pall of time,
 Which scarce hides thy visage wan;—
 That a tempest-cleaving Swan¹
 Of the songs of Albion,
 Driven from his ancestral streams
 By the might of evil dreams,
 Found a nest in thee; and Ocean
 Welcomed him with such emotion
 That its joy grew his, and sprung
 From his lips like music flung
 O'er a mighty thunder-fit
 Chastening terror:—what though yet
 Poesy's unfailing River,
 Which thro' Albion winds for ever
 Lashing with melodious wave
 Many a sacred Poet's grave,
 Mourn its latest nursing fled?
 What though thou with all thy dead
 Scarce can for this fame repay
 Aught thine own? oh, rather say,
 Though thy sins and slaveries foul
 Overcloud a sunlike soul?—
 As the ghost of Homer clings
 Round Scamander's wasting springs;
 As divinest Shakespere's might
 Fills Avon and the world with light
 Like omniscient power which he
 Imaged 'mid mortality;
 As the love from Petrarch's urn,
 Yet amid yon hills doth burn,
 A quenchless lamp by which the heart
 Sees things unearthly;—so thou art
 Mighty spirit—so shall be
 The City that did refuge thee.

Lo, the sun floats up the sky
 Like thought-winged Liberty,
 Till the universal light
 Seems to level plain and height;

¹ Byron.

From the sea a mist has spread,
 And the beams of morn lie dead
 On the towers of Venice now,
 Like its glory long ago.
 By the skirts of that gray cloud
 Many-domèd Padua proud
 Stands, a peopled solitude,
 'Mid the harvest-shining plain,
 Where the peasant heaps his grain
 In the garner of his foe,
 And the milk-white oxen slow
 With the purple vintage strain,
 Heaped upon the creaking wain,
 That the brutal Celt may swill
 Drunken sleep with savage will;
 And the sickle to the sword
 Lies unchanged, though many a lord,
 Like a weed whose shade is poison,
 Overgrows this region's foison,
 Sheaves of whom are ripe to come
 To destruction's harvest home:
 Men must reap the things they sow,
 Force from force must ever flow,
 Or worse; but 'tis a bitter woe
 That love or reason cannot change
 The despot's rage, the slave's revenge.

Padua, thou within whose walls
 Those mute guests at festivals,
 Son and Mother, Death and Sin,
 Played at dice for Ezzelin,
 Till Death cried, "I win, I win!"
 And Sin cursed to lose the wager,
 But Death promised, to assuage her,
 That he would petition for
 Her to be made Vice-Emperor,
 When the destined years were o'er,
 Over all between the Po
 And the eastern Alpine snow,
 Under the mighty Austrian.
 Sin smiled so as Sin only can,
 And since that time, ay, long before,
 Both have ruled from shore to shore,
 That incestuous pair, who follow
 Tyrants as the sun the swallow,
 As Repentance follows Crime,
 And as changes follow Time.

In thine halls the lamp of learning,
 Padua, now no more is burning;
 Like a meteor, whose wild way
 Is lost over the grave of day,
 It gleams betrayed and to betray:
 Once remotest nations came
 To adore that sacred flame,
 When it lit not many a hearth
 On this cold and gloomy earth:
 Now new fires from antique light
 Spring beneath the wide world's might;

But their spark lies dead in thee,
 Trampled out by tyranny.
 As the Norway woodman quells,
 In the depth of piny dells,
 One light flame among the brakes,
 While the boundless forest shakes,
 And its mighty trunks are torn
 By the fire thus lowly born :
 The spark beneath his feet is dead,
 He starts to see the flames it fed
 Howling through the darkened sky
 With a myriad tongues victoriously,
 And sinks down in fear : so thou,
 O Tyranny, beholdest now
 Light around thee, and thou hearest
 The loud flames ascend, and fearest :
 Grovel on the earth ; ay, hide
 In the dust thy purple pride !

Noon descends around me now :
 'Tis the noon of autumn's glow,
 When a soft and purple mist
 Like a vaporous amethyst,
 Or an air-dissolved star
 Mingling light and fragrance, far
 From the curved horizon's bound
 To the point of heaven's profound,
 Fills the overflowing sky ;
 And the plains that silent lie
 Underneath, the leaves unsodden
 Where the infant frost has trodden
 With his morning-winged feet,
 Whose bright print is gleaming yet ;
 And the red and golden vines,
 Piercing with their trellised lines
 The rough, dark-skirted wilderness ;
 The dun and bladed grass no less,
 Pointing from this hoary tower
 In the windless air ; the flower
 Glimmering at my feet ; the line
 Of the olive-sandalled Apennine,
 In the south dimly islanded ;
 And the Alps, whose snows are spread
 High between the clouds and sun ;
 And of living things each one ;
 And my spirit which so long
 Darkened this swift stream of song,
 Interpenetrated lie
 By the glory of the sky :
 Be it love, light, harmony,
 Odor or the soul of all
 Which from heaven like dew doth fall,
 Or the mind which feeds this verse
 Peopling the lone universe.

Noon descends, and after noon
 Autumn's evening meets me soon,
 Leading the infantine moon,
 And that one star, which to her

Almost seems to minister
 Half the crimson light she brings
 From the sunset's radiant springs :
 And the soft dreams of the morn
 (Which like winged winds had borne
 To that silent isle, which lies
 'Mid remembered agonies,
 The frail bark of this lone being)
 Pass, to other sufferers fleeing,
 And its ancient pilot, Pain,
 Sits beside the helm again.

Other flowering isles must be
 In the sea of life and agony :
 Other spirits float and flee
 O'er that gulf : even now, perhaps,
 On some rock the wild wave wraps,
 With folded wings they waiting sit
 For my bark, to pilot it
 To some calm and blooming cove,
 Where for me, and those I love,
 May a windless bower be built,
 Far from passion, pain, and guilt,
 In a dell 'mid lawny hills,
 Which the wild sea-murmur fills,
 And soft sunshine, and the sound
 Of old forests echoing round,
 And the light and smell divine
 Of all flowers that breathe and shine :
 We may live so happy there,
 That the spirits of the air,
 Envyng us, may even entice
 To our healing paradise
 The polluting multitude ;
 But their rage would be subdued
 By that clime divine and calm,
 And the winds whose wings rain balm
 On the uplifted soul, and leaves
 Under which the bright sea heaves ;
 While each breathless interval
 In their whisperings musical
 The inspired soul supplies
 With its own deep melodies,
 And the love which heals all strife
 Circling, like the breath of life,
 All things in that sweet abode
 With its own mild brotherhood :
 They, not it, would change ; and soon
 Every sprite beneath the moon
 Would repent its envy vain,
 And the earth grow young again.

October, 1818. 1819.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,
 The waves are dancing fast and bright

Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
 The purple noon's transparent might,
 The breath of the moist earth is light,
 Around its unexpanded buds;
 Like many a voice of one delight,
 The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,
 The City's voice itself is soft like Soli-
 tude's.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor
 With green and purple seaweeds
 strown;

I see the waves upon the shore,
 Like light dissolved in star-showers,
 thrown:

I sit upon the sands alone,
 The lightning of the noontide ocean
 Is flashing round me, and a tone
 Arises from its measured motion,
 How sweet! did any heart now share in
 my emotion.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
 Nor peace within nor calm abroad,
 Nor that content surpassing wealth
 The sage in meditation found,
 And walked with inward glory
 crowned—

Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leis-
 ure.

Others I see whom these surround—
 Smiling they live, and call life pleas-
 ure;—

To me that cup has been dealt in another
 measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild,
 Even as the winds and waters are;
 I could lie down like a tired child,
 And weep away the life of care
 Which I have borne and yet must
 bear,

Till death like sleep might steal on me,
 And I might feel in the warm air
 My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
 Breathe o'er my dying brain its last
 monotony.

Some might lament that I were cold,
 As I, when this sweet day is gone,
 Which my lost heart, too soon grown
 old,

Insults with this untimely moan;
 They might lament—for I am one
 Whom men love not,—and yet regret,
 Unlike this day, which, when the sun
 Shall on its stainless glory set.

Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in
 memory yet. 1818. 1824.

SONNET: ENGLAND IN 1819

An old, mad, blind, despised, and dying
 king,—
 Princes, the dregs of their dull race,
 who flow
 Through public scorn,—mud from a
 muddy spring,—
 Rulers who neither see, nor feel, nor
 know,
 But leech-like to their fainting country
 cling,
 Till they drop, blind in blood, without a
 blow,—
 A people starved and stabbed in the
 untitled field,—
 An army, which liberticide and prey
 Makes as a two-edged sword to all who
 wield
 Golden and sanguine laws which tempt
 and slay;
 Religion Christless, Godless—a book
 sealed;
 A Senate,—Time's worst statute unre-
 pealed,—
 Are graves, from which a glorious
 Phantom may
 Burst, to illumine our tempestuous day.
 1819. 1839.

W^d ODE TO THE WEST WIND¹

I

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of
 Autumn's being,
 Thou, from whose unseen presence the
 leaves dead
 Are driven, like ghosts from an en-
 chanter fleeing,
 Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic
 red,
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
 The winged seeds, where they lie cold
 and low,

¹ This poem was conceived and chiefly written in a wood that skirts the Arno, near Florence, and on a day when that tempestuous wind, whose temperature is at once mild and animating, was collecting the vapors which pour down the autumnal rains. They began, as I foresaw, at sunset with a violent tempest of hail and rain, attended by that magnificent thunder and lightning peculiar to the Cisalpine regions.

The phenomenon alluded to at the conclusion of the third stanza is well known to naturalists. The vegetation at the bottom of the sea, of rivers, and of lakes, sympathizes with that of the land in the change of seasons, and is consequently influenced by the winds which announce it. (*Shelley's note.*)

Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth,
and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed
in air)
With living hues and odors plain and
hill;

Wild Spirit, which art moving every-
where;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, Oh hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep
sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves
are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of
Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are
spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the
head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the
dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height
The locks of the approaching storm.
Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing
night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapors, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst:
Oh hear!

III

Thou who didst waken from his sum-
mer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline
streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser
day,

All overgrown with azure moss and
flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing
them! Thou

For whose path the Atlantic's level
powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while
far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods
which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with
fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves:
Oh hear!

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and
share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over
heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er
have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore
need.

Oh lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained
and bowed

One too like thee: tameless, and swift,
and proud.

V

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal
tone,

Sweet though in sadness. Be thou,
spirit fierce,

My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new
birth!

And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished
hearth

Ashes and sparks, my words among
mankind!

Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumpet of a prophecy ! O, wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far be-
hind ? 1819. 1820.

THE INDIAN SERENADE

I ARISE from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright :
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me—who knows how !
To thy chamber window, Sweet !

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
And the Champak odors fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream ;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart ;—
As I must on thine,
O ! beloved as thou art !

Oh lift me from the grass !
I die ! I faint ! I fail !

Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas !
My heart beats loud and fast ;—
Oh ! press it to thine own again,
Where it will break at last.
1819. 1822.

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY

THE Fountains mingle with the River
And the Rivers with the Ocean,
The winds of Heaven mix for ever
With a sweet emotion ;
Nothing in the world is single ;
All things by a law divine
In one spirit meet and mingle.
Why not I with thine ?—

See the mountains kiss high Heaven
And the waves clasp one another ;
No sister-flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother,
And the sunlight clasps the earth
And the moonbeams kiss the sea :
What are all these kissings worth
If thou kiss not me ? 1819. 1819.

PROMETHEUS UNBOUND¹

A LYRICAL DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

AUDISNE HAEC AMPHIARAE, SUB TERRAM ABDITE ?

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

PROMETHEUS	MERCURY	} Oceanides
DEMOGORGON	HERCULES	
JUPITER	ASIA	
THE EARTH	PANTHEA	
OCEAN	IONE	
APOLLO THE PHANTASM OF JUPITER		
THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH		
THE SPIRIT OF THE MOON		
SPIRITS OF THE HOURS		
SPIRITS. ECHOES. FAUNS. FURIES		

ACT I

SCENE—A RAVINE OF ICY ROCKS IN THE
INDIAN CAUCASUS.

PROMETHEUS is discovered bound to the
Precipice. PANTHEA and IONE are
seated at his feet. Time, night. Dur-
ing the Scene, morning slowly breaks.

¹ See note at the end of the poem.

Prometheus. Monarch of Gods and
Demons, and all Spirits
But One, who throng those bright and
rolling worlds
Which Thou and I alone of living things
Behold with sleepless eyes ! regard this
Earth
Made multitudinous with thy slaves,
whom thou
Requittest for knee-worship, prayer, and
praise,
And toil, and hecatombs of broken
hearts,
With fear and self-contempt and barren
hope.
Whilst me, who am thy foe, eyeless in
hate,
Hast thou made reign and triumph, to
thy scorn
O'er mine own misery and thy vain
revenge.

Three thousand years of sleep-unsheltered hours,
 And moments aye divided by keen pangs
 Till they seemed years, torture and solitude,
 Scorn and despair, — these are mine empire;—
 More glorious far than that which thou surveyest
 From thine unenvied throne, O, Mighty God!
 Almighty, had I deigned to share the shame
 Of thine ill tyranny, and hung not here
 Nailed to this wall of eagle-baffling mountain,
 Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured; without herb,
 Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of life.
 Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!
 No change, no pause, no hope! Yet I endure.
 I ask the Earth, have not the mountains felt?
 I ask yon Heaven, the all-beholding Sun,
 Has it not seen? The Sea, in storm or calm,
 Heaven's ever-changing Shadow, spread below,
 Have its deaf waves not heard my agony?
 Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!

The crawling glaciers pierce me with the spears
 Of their moon-freezing crystals, the bright chains
 Eat with their burning cold into my bones,
 Heaven's winged hound, polluting from thy lips
 His beak in poison not his own, tears up
 My heart; and shapeless sights come wandering by,
 The ghastly people of the realm of dream,
 Mocking me: and the Earthquake-fiends are charged
 To wrench the rivets from my quivering wounds
 When the rocks split and close again behind:
 While from their loud abysses howling throng
 The goni of the storm, urging the rage
 Of whirlwind, and afflict me with keen hail.
 And yet to me welcome is day and night,

Whether one breaks the hoar frost of the morn,
 Or starry, dim, and slow, the other climbs
 The leaden-colored east; for then they lead
 The wingless, crawling hours, one among whom
 —As some dark Priest hailes the reluctant victim—
 Shall drag thee, cruel King, to kiss the blood
 From these pale feet, which then might trample thee
 If they disdained not such a prostrate slave.
 Disdain! Ah no! I pity thee. What ruin
 Will hunt thee undefended thro' the wide Heaven!
 How will thy soul, cloven to its depth with terror,
 Gape like a hell within! I speak in grief,
 Not exultation, for I hate no more,
 As then ere misery made me wise. The curse
 Once breathed on thee I would recall. Ye Mountains,
 Whose many-voiced Echoes, through the mist
 Of cataracts, flung the thunder of that spell!
 Ye icy Springs, stagnant with wrinkling frost,
 Which vibrated to hear me, and then crept
 Shuddering thro' India! Thou serenest Air,
 Thro' which the Sun walks burning without beams!
 And ye swift Whirlwinds, who on poised wings
 Hung mute and moveless o'er yon hushed abyss,
 As thunder, louder than your own, made rock
 The orb'd world! If then my words had power,
 Though I am changed so that aught evil wish
 Is dead within; although no memory be
 Of what is hate, let them not lose it now!
 What was that curse? for ye all heard me speak.

First Voice (from the Mountains)

Thrice three hundred thousand years

O'er the Earthquake's couch we
stood :
Oft, as men convulsed with fears,
We trembled in our multitude.

Second Voice (from the Springs)

Thunderbolts had parched our water,
We had been stained with bitter
blood,
And had run mute, 'mid shrieks of
slaughter,
Thro' a city and a solitude.

Third Voice (from the Air)

I had clothed, since Earth uprose,
Its wastes in colors not their own,
And oft had my serene repose
Been cloven by many a rending
groan.

Fourth Voice (from the Whirlwinds)

We had soared beneath these moun-
tains
Unresting ages; nor had thunder,
Nor yon volcano's flaming fountains,
Nor any power above or under
Ever made us mute with wonder.

First Voice

But never bowed our snowy crest
As at the voice of thine unrest.

Second Voice

Never such a sound before
To the Indian waves we bore.
A pilot asleep on the howling sea
Leaped up from the deck in agony,
And heard, and cried, "Ah, woe is me!"
And died as mad as the wild waves be.

Third Voice

By such dread words from Earth to
Heaven
My still realm was never riven;
When its wound was closed, there stood
Darkness o'er the day like blood.

Fourth Voice

And we shrank back; for dreams of ruin
To frozen caves our flight pursuing
Made us keep silence—thus—and thus—
Though silence is a hell to us.

The Earth. The tongueless Caverns
of the craggy hills

Cried "Misery!" then; the hollow
Heaven replied,
"Misery!" and the Ocean's purple
waves,
Climbing the land, howled to the lash-
ing winds,
And the pale nations heard it, "Misery!"
Prometheus. I hear a sound of voices:
not the voice
Which I gave forth. Mother, thy sons
and thou
Scorn him, without whose all-enduring
will
Beneath the fierce omnipotence of Jove,
Both they and thou had vanished, like
thin mist
Unrolled on the morning wind. Know
ye not me,
The Titan? He who made his agony
The barrier to your else all-conquering
foe?
Oh, rock-embosomed lawns, and snow-
fed streams,
Now seen athwart frore vapors, deep
below,
Thro' whose o'ershadowing woods I
wandered once
With Asia, drinking life from her loved
eyes;
Why scorns the spirit which informs ye,
now
To commune with me? me alone, who
checked,
As one who checks a fiend-drawn
charioteer,
The falsehood and the force of him who
reigns
Supreme, and with the groans of pining
slaves
Fills your dim glens and liquid wilder-
nesses:
Why answer ye not, still? Brethren!
The Earth. They dare not.
Prometheus. Who dares? for I would
hear that curse again.
Ha, what an awful whisper rises up!
'Tis scarce like sound; it tingles thro'
the frame
As lightning tingles, hovering ere it
strike.
Speak, Spirit! from thine inorganic
voice
I only know that thou art moving near
And love. How cursed I him?
The Earth. How canst thou hear
Who knowest not the language of the
dead?
Prometheus. Thou art a living spirit:
speak as they.

The Earth. I dare not speak like life,
lest Heaven's fell King
Should hear, and link me to some wheel
of pain
More torturing than the one whereon I
roll.

Subtle thou art and good, and tho' the
Gods
Hear not this voice, yet thou art more
than God
Being wise and kind : earnestly hearken
now.

Prometheus. Obscurely thro' my
brain, like shadows dim,
Sweep awful thoughts, rapid and thick.
I feel

Faint, like one mingled in entwining
love ;

Yet 'tis not pleasure.

The Earth. No, thou canst not hear ;
Thou art immortal, and this tongue is
known

Only to those who die.

Prometheus. And what art thou,
O, melancholy Voice ?

The Earth. I am the Earth,
Thy mother ; she within whose stony
veins,

To the last fibre of the loftiest tree
Whose thin leaves trembled in the
frozen air,

Joy ran, as blood within a living frame,
When thou didst from her bosom, like a
cloud,

Of glory, arise, a spirit of keen joy !

And at thy voice her pining sons uplifted
Their prostrate brows from the polluting
dust.

And our almighty Tyrant with fierce
dread

Grew pale, until his thunder chained
thee here.

Then, see those million worlds which
burn and roll

Around us : their inhabitants beheld
My spherèd light wane in wide Heaven ;
the sea

Was lifted by strange tempest, and new
fire

From earthquake-rifted mountains of
bright snow

Shook its portentous hair beneath
Heaven's frown :

Lightning and Inundation vexed the
plains ;

Blue thistles bloomed in cities ; foodless
toads

Within voluptuous chambers panting
crawled :

When Plague had fallen on man, and
beast and worm,
And Famine ; and black blight on herb
and tree ;

And in the corn, and vines, and meadow-
grass,

Teemed ineradicable poisonous weeds
Draining their growth, for my wan
breast was dry

With grief ; and the thin air, my breath,
was stained

With the contagion of a mother's hate
Breathed on her child's destroyer ; aye,
I heard

Thy curse, the which, if thou remem-
berest not,

Yet my innumerable seas and streams,
Mountains, and caves, and winds, and
yon wide air,

And the inarticulate people of the
dead,

Preserve, a treasured spell. We meditate
In secret joy and hope those dreadful
words

But dare not speak them.

Prometheus. Venerable mother !

All else who live and suffer take from
thee

Some comfort ; flowers, and fruits, and
happy sounds,

And love, though fleeting ; these may
not be mine.

But mine own words, I pray, deny me
not.

The Earth. They shall be told. Ere
• Babylon was dust,

The Magus Zoroaster, my dead child,
Met his own image walking in the gar-
den.

That apparition, sole of men, he saw.

For know there are two worlds of life
and death :

One that which thou beholdest ; but the
other

Is underneath the grave, where do in-
habit

The shadows of all forms that think
and live

Till death unite them and they part
no more ;

Dreams and the light imaginings of
men,

And all that fate creates or love desires,
Terrible, strange, sublime and beauteous
shapes.

There thou art, and dost hang, a writh-
ing shade,

'Mid whirlwind-peopled mountains ; all
the gods

Are there, and all the powers of nameless worlds,
 Vast, sceptred phantoms; heroes, men,
 and beasts;
 And Demogorgon, a tremendous gloom;
 And he, the supreme Tyrant, on his throne
 Of burning gold. Son, one of these shall utter
 The curse which all remember. Call at will
 Thine own ghost, or the ghost of Jupiter,
 Hades or Typhon, or what mightier Gods
 From all-prolific Evil, since thy ruin
 Have sprung, and trampled on my prostrate sons.
 Ask, and they must reply: so the revenge
 Of the Supreme may sweep thro' vacant shades,
 As rainy wind thro' the abandoned gate
 Of a fallen palace.
Prometheus. Mother, let not aught
 Of that which may be evil, pass again
 My lips, or those of aught resembling me.
 Phantasm of Jupiter, arise, appear!

Ione

My wings are folded o'er mine ears:
 My wings are crossed o'er mine eyes:
 Yet thro' their silver shade appears,
 And thro' their lulling plumes arise,
 A Shape, a throng of sounds;
 May it be no ill to thee
 O thou of many wounds!
 Near whom, for our sweet sister's sake,
 Ever thus we watch and wake.

Panthea

The sound is of whirlwind underground
 Earthquake, and fire, and mountains
 cloven;
 The shape is awful like the sound,
 Clothed in dark purple, star-inwoven.
 A sceptre of pale gold
 To stay steps proud, o'er the slow
 cloud
 His veined hand doth hold.
 Cruel he looks, but calm and strong,
 Like one who does, not suffers wrong.
Phantasm of Jupiter. Why have
 the secret powers of this strange
 world
 Driven me, a frail and empty phantom,
 hither
 On direst storms? What unaccustomed
 sounds
 Are hovering on my lips, unlike the voice
 With which our pallid race hold ghastly
 talk

In darkness? And, proud sufferer, who
 art thou?

Prometheus. Tremendous Image, as
 thou art must be
 He whom thou shadowest forth. I am
 his foe,
 The Titan. Speak the words which I
 would hear,
 Although no thought inform thine
 empty voice.
The Earth. Listen! And tho' your
 echoes must be mute,
 Gray mountains, and old woods, and
 haunted springs,
 Prophetic caves, and isle-surrounding
 streams,
 Rejoice to hear what yet ye cannot speak.

Phantasm. A spirit seizes me and
 speaks within:

It tears me as fire tears a thunder-cloud.
Panthea. See, how he lifts his mighty
 looks, the Heaven

Darkens above.

Ione. He speaks! O shelter me!

Prometheus. I see the curse on
 gestures proud and cold,
 And looks of firm defiance, and calm hate,
 And such despair as mocks itself with
 smiles,
 Written as on a scroll: yet speak:
 Oh, speak!

Phantasm

Fiend, I defy thee! with a calm, fixed
 mind,
 All that thou canst inflict I bid thee
 do;
 Foul Tyrant both of Gods and Human-
 kind,
 One only being shalt thou not
 subdue.
 Rain then thy plagues upon me here,
 Ghastly disease, and frenzying fear;
 And let alternate frost and fire
 Eat into me, and be thine ire
 Lightning, and cutting hail, and legioned
 forms
 Of furies, driving by upon the wounding
 storms.

Ay, do thy worst. Thou art om-
 nipotent.

O'er all things but thyself I gave
 thee power,

And my own will. Be thy swift
 mischiefs sent

To blast mankind, from yon ethereal
 tower.

Let thy malignant spirit move

In darkness over those I love :
 On me and mine I imprecate
 The utmost torture of thy hate ;
 And thus devote to sleepless agony,
 This undecling head, while thou must
 reign on high.

But thou, who art the God and Lord :
 O, thou,
 Who fillest with thy soul this world
 of woe,
 To whom all things of Earth and
 Heaven do bow
 In fear and worship : all-prevailing
 foe !
 I curse thee ! let a sufferer's curse
 Clasp thee, his torturer, like remorse ;
 Till thine Infinity shall be
 A robe of envenomed agony ;
 And thine Omnipotence a crown of pain,
 To cling like burning gold round thy
 dissolving brain.

Heap on thy soul, by virtue of this
 Curse
 Ill deeds, then be thou damned,
 beholding good ;
 Both infinite as is the universe,
 And thou, and thy self-torturing
 solitude.
 An awful image of calm power
 Though now thou sittest, let the hour
 Come, when thou must appear to be
 That which thou art internally.
 And after many a false and fruitless
 crime
 Scorn track thy lagging fall thro' bound-
 less space and time.

Prometheus. Were these my words,
 O, Parent ?

The Earth. They were thine.
Prometheus. It doth repent me :
 words are quick and vain ;
 Grief for awhile is blind, and so was
 mine.
 I wish no living thing to suffer pain.

The Earth

Misery, Oh misery to me,
 That Jove at length should vanquish
 thee.
 Wail, howl aloud, Land and Sea,
 The Earth's rent heart shall answer
 ye.
 Howl, Spirits of the living and the dead,
 Your refuge, your defence lies fallen and
 vanquishéd.

First Echo

Lies fallen and vanquishéd !

Second Echo

Fallen and vanquishéd !

Ione

Fear not : 'tis but some passing spasm,
 The Titan is unvanquished still.
 But see, where thro' the azure chasm
 Of yon forked and snowy hill
 Trampling the slant winds on high
 With golden-sandalled feet, that
 glow
 Under plumes of purple dye,
 Like rose-ensanguined ivory,
 A Shape comes now,
 Stretching on high from his right hand
 A serpent-cinctured wand.
Panthea. 'Tis Jove's world-wander-
 ing herald, Mercury.

Ione

And who are those with hydra tresses
 And iron wings that climb the wind,
 Whom the frowning God represses
 Like vapors steaming up behind,
 Clanging loud, an endless crowd—

Panthea

These are Jove's tempest-walking
 hounds,
 Whom he gluts with groans and blood,
 When charioted on sulphurous cloud
 He bursts Heaven's bounds.

Ione

Are they now led, from the thin dead
 On new pangs to be fed ?

Panthea

The Titan looks as ever, firm, not
 proud.
First Fury. Ha ! Iscent life !
Second Fury. Let me but look into
 his eyes !
Third Fury. The hope of torturing
 him smells like a heap
 Of corpses, to a death-bird after battle.
First Fury. Darest thou delay, O
 Herald ! take cheer, Hounds
 Of Hell : what if the Son of Maia soon
 Should make us food and sport—who
 can please long
 The Omnipotent ?
Mercury. Back to your towers of
 iron,

And gnash, beside the streams of fire
and wail,
Your foodless teeth. Geryon, arise!
and Gorgon,
Chimæra, and thou Sphinx, subtlest of
fiends
Who ministered to Thebes Heaven's
poisoned wine,
Unnatural love, and more unnatural
hate:

These shall perform your task.

First Fury. Oh, mercy! mercy!
We die with our desire: drive us not
back!

Mercury. Crouch then in silence.

Awful Sufferer

To thee unwilling, most unwillingly
I come, by the great Father's will driven
down,

To execute a doom of new revenge.

Alas! I pity thee, and hate myself

That I can do no more: aye from thy
sight

Returning, for a season, Heaven seems
Hell,

So thy worn form pursues me night and
day,

Smiling reproach. Wise art thou, firm
and good,

But vainly wouldst stand forth alone in
strife

Against the Omnipotent; as yon clear
lamps

That measure and divide the weary
years

From which there is no refuge, long
have taught

And long must teach. Even now thy
Torturer arms

With the strange might of unimagined
pains

The powers who scheme slow agonies in
Hell,

And my commission is to lead them
here,

Or what more subtle, foul, or savage
fiends

People the abyss, and leave them to
their task.

Be it not so! there is a secret known
To thee, and to none else of living
things,

Which may transfer the sceptre of wide
Heaven,

The fear of which perplexes the Su-
preme:

Clothe it in words, and bid it clasp his
throne

In intercession; bend thy soul in prayer,

And like a suppliant in some gorgeous
fane,

Let the will kneel within thy haughty
heart:

For benefits and meek submission tame
The fiercest and the mightiest.

Prometheus. Evil minds

Change good to their own nature. I
gave all

He has; and in return he chains me here
Years, ages, night and day: whether

the Sun

Split my parched skin, or in the moony
night

The crystal-winged snow cling round
my hair:

Whilst my beloved race is trampled
down

By his thought-executing ministers.
Such is the tyrant's recompense: 'tis
just:

He who is evil can receive no good;
And for a world bestowed, or a friend
lost,

He can feel hate, fear, shame; not gra-
titude:

He but requites me for his own mis-
deed.

Kindness to such is keen reproach, which
breaks

With bitter stings the light sleep of
Revenge.

Submission, thou dost know I cannot
try:

For what submission but that fatal word,
The death-seal of mankind's captivity,

Like the Sicilian's hair-suspended sword,
Which trembles o'er his crown, would

he accept,
Or could I yield? Which yet I will not
yield.

Let others flatter Crime, where it sits
throned

In brief Omnipotence: secure are they:
For Justice, when triumphant, will

weep down

Pity, not punishment, on her own
wrongs,

Too much avenged by those who err.
I wait,

Enduring thus, the retributive hour
Which since we spake is even nearer
now.

But hark, the hell-hounds clamor: fear
delay:

Behold! Heaven lowers under thy
Father's frown.

Mercury. Oh, that we might be
spared: I to inflict

And thou to suffer! Once more answer me:

Thou knowest not the period of Jove's power?

Prometheus. I know but this, that it must come.

Mercury. Alas!

Thou canst not count thy years to come of pain?

Prometheus. They last while Jove must reign: nor more, nor less

Do I desire or fear.

Mercury. Yet pause, and plunge Into Eternity, where recorded time, Even all that we imagine, age on age, Seems but a point, and the reluctant mind

Flags wearily in its unending flight, Till it sink, dizzy, blind, lost, shelterless;

Perchance it has not numbered the slow years

Which thou must spend in torture, unreprieved?

Prometheus. Perchance no thought can count them, yet they pass.

Mercury. If thou might'st dwell among the Gods the while

Lapped in voluptuous joy?

Prometheus. I would not quit This bleak ravine, these unrepentant pains.

Mercury. Alas! I wonder at, yet pity thee.

Prometheus. Pity the self-despising slaves of Heaven,

Not me, within whose mind sits peace serene,

As light in the sun, throned: how vain is talk!

Call up the fiends.

Ione. O, sister, look! White fire Has cloven to the roots yon huge snow-loaded cedar;

How fearfully God's thunder howls behind!

Mercury. I must obey his words and thine: alas!

Most heavily remorse hangs at my heart!

Panthea. See where the child of Heaven, with winged feet, Runs down the slanted sunlight of the dawn.

Ione. Dear sister, close thy plumes over thine eyes

Lest thou behold and die: they come: they come

Blackening the birth of day with countless wings,

And hollow underneath, like death.

First Fury. Prometheus!

Second Fury. Immortal Titan!

Third Fury. Champion of Heaven's slaves!

Prometheus. He whom some dreadful voice invokes is here,

Prometheus, the chained Titan. Horrible forms,

What and who are ye? Never yet there came

Phantasms so foul thro' monster-teeming Hell

From the all-miscreative brain of Jove; Whilst I behold such execrable shapes,

Methinks I grow like what I contemplate,

And laugh and stare in loathsome sympathy.

First Fury. We are the ministers of pain, and fear,

And disappointment, and mistrust, and hate,

And clinging crime; and as lean dogs pursue

Thro' wood and lake some struck and sobbing fawn,

We track all things that weep, and bleed, and live,

When the great King betrays them to our will.

Prometheus. Oh! many fearful natures in one name,

I know ye; and these lakes and echoes know

The darkness and the clangor of your wings.

But why more hideous than your loathed selves

Gather ye up in legions from the deep?

Second Fury. We knew not that: Sisters, rejoice, rejoice!

Prometheus. Can aught exult in its deformity?

Second Fury. The beauty of delight makes lovers glad,

Gazing on one another: so are we.

As from the rose which the pale priestess kneels

To gather for her festal crown of flowers The aerial crimson falls, flushing her cheek,

So from our victim's destined agony The shade which is our form invests us

round,

Else we are shapeless as our mother Night.

Prometheus. I laugh your power, and his who sent you here,

To lowest scorn. Pour forth the cup of pain.

First Fury. Thou thinkest we will rend thee bone from bone,
And nerve from nerve, working like fire within?

Prometheus. Pain is my element, as hate is thine;

Ye rend me now : I care not.

Second Fury. Dost imagine
We will but laugh into thy lidless eyes?

Prometheus. I weigh not what ye do,
but what ye suffer,
Being evil. Cruel was the power which called

You, or aught else so wretched, into light.

Third Fury. Thou think'st we will live thro' thee, one by one,
Like animal life, and tho' we can obscure not

The soul which burns within, that we will dwell

Beside it, like a vain loud multitude
Vexing the self-content of wisest men :
That we will be dread thought beneath thy brain,

And foul desire round thine astonished heart,

And blood within thy labyrinthine veins
Crawling like agony.

Prometheus. Why, ye are thus now ;
Yet am I king over myself, and rule
The torturing and conflicting throngs within,

As Jove rules you when Hell grows
mutinous.

Chorus of Furies

From the ends of the earth, from the
ends of the earth,
Where the night has its grave and the
morning its birth,

Come, come, come !
Oh, ye who shake hills with the scream
of your mirth,

When cities sink howling in ruin ; and
ye

Who with wingless footsteps trample
the sea,

And close upon Shipwreck and Famine's
track,

Sit chattering with joy on the foodless
wreck,

Come, come, come !
Leave the bed, low, cold and red,
Strewed beneath a nation dead ;
Leave the hatred, as in ashes
Fire is left for future burning :

It will burst in bloodier fashion,
When ye stir it, soon returning :
Leave the self-contempt implanted
In young spirits, sense-enchanted,

Misery's yet unkindled fuel :
Leave Hell's secrets half unchanted
To the maniac dreamer ; cruel
More than ye can be with hate
Is he with fear.

Come, come, come !

We are steaming up from Hell's wide
gate,

And we burthen the blast of the
atmosphere,

But vainly we toil till ye come here.

Ione. Sister, I hear the thunder of
new wings.

Panthea. These solid mountains
quiver with the sound

Even as the tremulous air : their shadows
make

The space within my plumes more black
than night.

First Fury

Your call was as a winged car
Driven on whirlwinds fast and far ;
It rapt us from red gulf of war.

Second Fury

From wide cities, famine-wasted ;

Third Fury

Groans half heard, and blood untasted ;

Fourth Fury

Kingly conclaves stern and cold,
Where blood with gold is bought and
sold ;

Fifth Fury

From the furnace, white and hot,
In which—

A Fury

Speak not : whisper not
I know all that ye would tell,
But to speak might break the spell
Which must bend the Invincible,
The stern of thought ;
He yet defies the deepest power of
Hell.

Fury

Tear the veil !

Another Fury

It is torn.

Chorus

The pale stars of the morn
Shine on a misery, dire to be borne.

Dost thou faint, mighty Titan? We
 laugh thee to scorn.
 Dost thou boast the clear knowledge
 thou waken'dst for man?
 Then was kindled within him a thirst
 which outran
 Those perishing waters; a thirst of fierce
 fever,
 Hope, love, doubt, desire, which con-
 sume him for ever.
 One came forth of gentle worth
 Smiling on the sanguine earth;
 His words outlived him, like swift
 poison,
 Withering up truth, peace, and pity.
 Look! where round the wide horizon
 Many a million-peopled city
 Vomits smoke in the bright air.
 Mark that outcry of despair!
 'Tis his mild and gentle ghost
 Wailing for the faith he kindled:
 Look again, the flames almost
 To a glow-worm's lamp have
 dwindled:
 The survivors round the embers
 Gather in dread.
 Joy, joy, joy!
 Past ages crowd on thee, but each one
 remembers,
 And the future is dark, and the present
 is spread :
 Like a pillow of thorns for thy slumber-
 less head.

Semichorus I

Drops of bloody agony flow
 From his white and quivering brow.
 Grant a little respite now:
 See a disenchanted nation
 Springs like day from desolation;
 To Truth its state is dedicate,
 And Freedom leads it forth, her mate;
 A legions band of linked brothers
 Whom Love calls children—

Semichorus II

'Tis another's:
 See how kindred murder kin:
 'Tis the vintage time for death and sin;
 Blood, like new wine, bubbles within;
 Till Despair smothers
 The struggling world, which slaves and
 tyrants win.
 [All the FURIES vanish, except one.
 Ione. Hark, sister! what a low yet
 dreadful groan.
 Quite unsuppressed is tearing up the
 heart

Of the good Titan, as storms tear the
 deep,
 And beasts hear the sea moan in inland
 caves.

Darest thou observe how the fiends
 torture him?

Panthea. Alas! I looked forth twice,
 but will no more.

Ione. What didst thou see?

Panthea. A woful sight: a youth
 With patient looks nailed to a crucifix.

Ione. What next?

Panthea. The heaven around, the
 earth below

Was peopled with thick shapes of human
 death,

All horrible, and wrought by human
 hands,

And some appeared the work of human
 hearts,

For men were slowly killed by frowns
 and smiles:

And other sights too foul to speak and
 live

Were wandering by. Let us not tempt
 worse fear

By looking forth: those groans are grief
 enough.

Fury. Behold an emblem: those
 who do endure

Deep wrongs for man, and scorn, and
 chains, but heap

Thousandfold torment on themselves
 and him.

Prometheus. Remit the anguish of
 that lighted stare;

Close those wan lips; let that thorn-
 wounded brow

Stream not with blood; it mingles with
 thy tears!

Fix, fix those tortured orbs in peace and
 death,

So thy sick throes shake not that cruci-
 fix,

So those pale fingers play not with thy
 gore.

O, horrible! Thy name I will not speak,
 It hath become a curse. I see, I see

The wise, the mild, the lofty, and the
 just,

Whom thy slaves hate for being like to
 thee,

Some hunted by foul lies from their
 heart's home,

An early-chosen, late-lamented home;
 As hooded ounces cling to the driven
 hind;

Some linked to corpses in unwholesome
 cells:

Some—Hear I not the multitude laugh
loud?—

Impaled in lingering fire: and mighty
realms

Float by my feet, like sea-uprooted isles,
Whose sons are kneaded down in com-
mon blood

By the red light of their own burning
homes.

Fury. Blood thou canst see, and fire;
and canst hear groans;

Worse things, unheard, unseen, remain
behind.

Prometheus. Worse?

Fury. In each human heart
terror survives

The ruin it has gorged: the loftiest fear
All that they would disdain to think
were true:

Hypocrisy and custom make their minds
The fanes of many a worship, now out-
worn.

They dare not devise good for man's
estate,

And yet they know not that they do not
dare.

The good want power, but to weep
barren tears.

The powerful goodness want: worse
need for them.

The wise want love; and those who
love want wisdom;

And all best things are thus confused to
ill.

Many are strong and rich, and would
be just,

But live among their suffering fellow-
men

As if none felt: they know not what
they do.

Prometheus. Thy words are like a
cloud of wingéd snakes;

And yet I pity those they torture not.

Fury. Thou pitiest them? I speak
no more! [*Vanishes.*]

Prometheus. Ah woe!
Ah woe! Alas! pain, pain ever, for
ever!

I close my tearless eyes, but see more
clear

Thy works within my woe-illumed mind,
Thou subtle tyrant! Peace is in the
grave.

The grave hides all things beautiful and
good:

I am a God and cannot find it there,
Nor would I seek it: for, though dread

revenge,
This is defeat, fierce king, not victory.

The sights with which thou torturest
gird my soul

With new endurance, till the hour arrives
When they shall be no types of things
which are.

Panthea. Alas! what sawest thou?

Prometheus. There are two woes:

To speak, and to behold; thou spare
me one.

Names are there, Nature's sacred watch-
words, they

Were borne aloft in bright emblazonry;
The nations thronged around, and cried
aloud,

As with one voice, Truth, liberty, and
love!

Suddenly fierce confusion fell from
heaven

Among them: there was strife, deceit,
and fear:

Tyrants rushed in, and did divide the
spoil.

This was the shadow of the truth I saw.

The Earth. I felt thy torture, son,
with such mixed joy

As pain and virtue give. To cheer thy
state

I bid ascend those subtle and fair spirits,
Whose homes are the dim caves of human
thought,

And who inhabit, as birds wing the wind,
Its world-surrounding ether: they be-
hold

Beyond that twilight realm, as in a glass,
The future: may they speak comfort
to thee!

Panthea. Look, sister, where a troop
of spirits gather,

Like flocks of clouds in spring's delight-
ful weather,

Thronging in the blue air!

Ione. And see! more come,
Like fountain-vapors when the winds
are dumb,

That climb up the ravine in scattered
lines.

And, hark! is it the music of the pines?
Is it the lake? Is it the waterfall?

Panthea. 'Tis something sadder
sweeter far than all.

Chorus of Spirits

From unremembered ages we
Gentle guides and guardians be

Of heaven-oppressed mortality;
And we breathe, and sicken not,

The atmosphere of human thought.
Be it dim, and dank, and gray,

Like a storm-extinguished day,

His footsteps paved the world with light ;
 but as I past 'twas fading,
 And hollow Ruin yawned behind : great
 sages bound in madness,
 And headless patriots, and pale youths
 who perished, unupbraiding.
 Gleamed in the night. I wandered o'er,
 till thou, O King of sadness,
 Turned by thy smile the worst I saw to
 recollected gladness.

Sixth Spirit

Ah, sister ! Desolation is a delicate thing :
 It walks not on the earth, it floats not on
 the air,
 But treads with killing footstep, and
 fans with silent wing
 The tender hopes which in their hearts
 the best and gentlest bear ;
 Who, soothed to false repose by the
 fanning plumes above
 And the music-stirring motion of its
 soft and busy feet,
 Dream visions of aerial joy, and call the
 monster, Love,
 And wake, and find the shadow Pain,
 as he whom now we greet.

Chorus

Tho' Ruin now Love's shadow be,
 Following him, destroyingly,
 On Death's white and winged steed
 Which the fleetest cannot flee.
 Trampling down both flower and weed,
 Man and beast, and foul and fair,
 Like a tempest thro' the air ;
 Thou shalt quell this horseman grim,
 Woundless though in heart or limb.
Prometheus. Spirits ! how know ye
 this shall be ?

Chorus

In the atmosphere we breathe,
 As buds grow red when the snow-storms
 flee,
 From spring gathering up beneath,
 Whose mild winds shake the elder brake,
 And the wandering herdsmen know
 That the white-thorn soon will blow :
 Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Peace,
 When they struggle to increase,
 Are to us as soft winds be
 To shepherd boys, the prophecy
 Which begins and ends in thee.
Ione. Where are the Spirits fled ?
Panthea. Only a sense
 Remains of them, like the omnipotence
 Of music, when the inspired voice and
 lute

Languish, ere yet the responses are mute,
 Which thro' the deep and labyrinthine
 soul,
 Like echoes thro' long caverns, wind
 and roll.

Prometheus. How fair these airborne
 shapes ! and yet I feel
 Most vain all hope but love ; and thou
 art far,
 Asia ! who, when my being overflowed,
 Wert like a golden chalice to bright wine
 Which else had sunk into the thirsty
 dust.

All things are still : alas ! how heavily
 This quiet morning weighs upon my
 heart ;
 Tho' I should dream I could even sleep
 with grief

If slumber were denied not. I would fain
 Be what it is my destiny to be,
 The savior and the strength of suffer-
 ing man,
 Or sink into the original gulf of things :
 There is no agony, and no solace left ;
 Earth can console, Heaven can torment
 no more.

Panthea. Hast thou forgotten one
 who watches thee
 The cold dark night, and never sleeps
 but when

The shadow of thy spirit falls on her ?

Prometheus. I said all hope was vain
 but love : thou lovest.

Panthea. Deeply in truth ; but the
 eastern star looks white,
 And Asia waits in that far Indian vale
 The scene of her sad exile ; rugged once
 And desolate and frozen, like this ravine ;
 But now invested with fair flowers and
 herbs,
 And haunted by sweet airs and sounds,
 which flow
 Among the woods and waters, from the
 ether
 Of her transforming presence, which
 would fade
 If it were mingled not with thine.
 Farewell !

ACT II

SCENE I.—MORNING. A LOVELY VALE
 IN THE INDIAN CAUCASUS. ASIA
 alone.

Asia. From all the blasts of heaven
 thou hast descended :
 Yes, like a spirit, like a thought, which
 makes

Unwonted tears throng to the horny
eyes,

And beatings haunt the desolated heart,
Which should have learnt repose: thou
hast descended

Cradled in tempests; thou dost wake, O
Spring!

O child of many winds! As suddenly
Thou comest as the memory of a dream,
Which now is sad because it hath been
sweet;

Like genius, or like joy which riseth up
As from the earth, clothing with golden
clouds

The desert of our life.

This is the season, this the day, the hour;
At sunrise thou shouldst come, sweet
sister mine.

Too long desired, too long delaying,
come!

How like death-worms the wingless
moments crawl!

The point of one white star is quivering
still

Deep in the orange light of widening
morn

Beyond the purple mountains: thro' a
chasm

Of wind-divided mist the darker lake
Reflects it: now it wanes: it gleams
again

As the waves fade, and as the burning
threads

Of woven cloud unravel in pale air:

'Tis lost! and thro' yon peaks of cloud-
like snow

The roseate sunlight quivers: hear I not
The Æolian music of her sea-green
plumes

Winnowing the crimson dawn?

[PANTHEA enters.

I feel, I see

Those eyes which burn thro' smiles that
fade in tears,

Like stars half quenched in mists of silver
dew.

Belovèd and most beautiful, who wearest
The shadow of that soul by which I live,
How late thou art! the spherèd sun had
climbed

The sea: my heart was sick with hope,
before

The printless air felt thy belated plumes.

Panthea. Pardon, great Sister! but
my wings were faint

With the delight of a remembered
dream,

As are the noontide plumes of summer
winds

Satiate with sweet flowers. I was wont
to sleep

Peacefully, and awake refreshed and
calm

Before the sacred Titan's fall, and thy
Unhappy love, had made, thro' use and
pity,

Both love and woe familiar to my heart
As they had grown to thine: erewhile I
slept

Under the glaucous caverns of old Ocean
Within dim bowers of green and purple
moss,

Our young Ione's soft and milky arms
Locked then, as now, behind my dark,
moist hair,

While my shut eyes and cheek were
pressed within

The folded depth of her life-breathing
bosom:

But not as now, since I am made the
wind

Which fails beneath the music that I
bear

Of thy most wordless converse; since
dissolved

Into the sense with which love talks, my
rest

Was troubled and yet sweet; my waking
hours

Too full of care and pain.

Asia. Lift up thine eyes,
And let me read thy dream.

Panthea. As I have said
With our sea-sister at his feet I slept.

The mountain mists, condensing at our
voice

Under the moon, had spread their snowy
flakes,

From the keen ice shielding our linkèd
sleep.

Then two dreams came. One, I remem-
ber not.

But in the other his pale wound-worn
limbs

Fell from Prometheus, and the azure
night

Grew radiant with the glory of that form
Which lives unchanged within, and his
voice fell

Like music which makes giddy the dim
brain,

Faint with intoxication of keen joy:

"Sister of her whose footsteps pave the
world

With loveliness—more fair than aught
but her,

Whose shadow thou art—lift thine eyes
on me."

I lifted them: the overpowering light
 Of that immortal shape was shadowed
 o'er
 By love; which, from his soft and flow-
 ing limbs,
 And passion-parted lips, and keen, faint
 eyes,
 Steamed forth like vaporous fire; an
 atmosphere
 Which wrapt me in its all-dissolving
 power,
 As the warm ether of the morning sun
 Wraps ere it drinks some cloud of wan-
 dering dew.
 I saw not, heard not, moved not, only felt
 His presence flow and mingle thro' my
 blood
 Till it became his life, and his grew
 mine,
 And I was thus absorbed, until it passed,
 And like the vapors when the sun sinks
 down,
 Gathering again in drops upon the
 pines,
 And tremulous as they, in the deep
 night
 My being was condensed; and as the
 rays
 Of thought were slowly gathered, I could
 hear
 His voice, whose accents lingered ere
 they died
 Like footsteps of weak melody: thy
 name
 Among the many sounds alone I heard
 Of what might be articulate; tho' still
 I listened thro' the night when sound
 was none.
 Ione wakened then, and said to me:
 "Canst thou divine what troubles me
 to-night?
 I always knew what I desired before,
 Nor ever found delight to wish in vain.
 But now I cannot tell thee what I seek:
 I know not; something sweet, since it
 is sweet
 Even to desire; it is thy sport, false
 sister;
 Thou hast discovered some enchantment
 old,
 Whose spells have stolen my spirit as I
 slept
 And mingled it with thine: for when
 just now
 We kissed, I felt within thy parted lips
 The sweet air that sustained me, and
 the warmth
 Of the life-blood, for loss of which I
 faint.

Quivered between our intertwining
 arms."

I answered not, for the Eastern star
 grew pale,
 But fled to thee.

Asia. Thou speakest, but thy words
 Are as the air: I feel them not: Oh, lift
 Thine eyes, that I may read his written
 soul!

Panthea. I lift them tho' they droop
 beneath the load
 Of that they would express: what canst
 thou see

But thine own fairest shadow imaged
 there?

Asia. Thine eyes are like the deep,
 blue, boundless heaven
 Contracted to two circles underneath
 Their long, fine lashes; dark, far, mea-
 sureless,

Orb within orb, and line thro' line in-
 woven.

Panthea. Why lookest thou as if a
 spirit past?

Asia. There is a change: beyond
 their inmost depth

I see a shade, a shape: 'tis He, arrayed
 In the soft light of his own smiles, which
 spread

Like radiance from the cloud-surrounded
 moon.

Prometheus, it is thine! depart not yet!
 Say not those smiles that we shall meet
 again

Within that bright pavilion which their
 beams

Shall build on the waste world? The
 dream is told.

What shape is that between us? Its
 rude hair

Roughens the wind that lifts it, its
 regard

Is wild and quick, yet 'tis a thing of air,
 For thro' its gray robe gleams the golden
 dew

Whose stars the noon has quenched not
Dream. Follow! Follow!

Panthea. It is mine other dream.

Asia. It disappears.

Panthea. It passes now into my
 mind. Methought

As we sate here, the flower-infolding
 buds

Burst on yon lightning-blasted almond-
 tree,

When swift from the white Scythian
 wilderness

A wind swept forth wrinkling the Earth
 with frost:

I looked, and all the blossoms were
blown down;
But on each leaf was stamped, as the
blue bells
Of Hyacinth tell Apollo's written grief,
O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW!

Asia. As you speak, your words
Fill, pause by pause, my own forgotten
sleep

With shapes. Methought among the
lawns together

We wandered, underneath the young
gray dawn,

And multitudes of dense white fleecy
clouds

Were wandering in thick flocks along
the mountains

Shepherded by the slow, unwilling
wind;

And the white dew on the new bladed
grass,

Just piercing the dark earth, hung
silently:

And there was more which I remember
not:

But on the shadows of the morning
clouds,

Athwart the purple mountain slope, was
written

FOLLOW, O, FOLLOW! as they vanished
by,

And on each herb, from which Heaven's
dew had fallen,

The like was stamped, as with a wither-
ing fire,

A wind arose among the pines; it shook
The clinging music from their boughs,
and then

Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the fare-
well of ghosts,

Were heard: O, FOLLOW, FOLLOW,
FOLLOW ME!

And then I said: "Panthea, look on me."
But in the depth of those beloved eyes
Still I saw, FOLLOW, FOLLOW!

Echo. Follow, follow!

Panthea. The crags, this clear spring
morning, mock our voices
As they were spirit-tongued.

Asia. It is some being
Around the crags. What fine clear
sounds! O, list!

Echoes (unseen)

Echoes we: listen!

We cannot stay:

As dew-stars glisten

Then fade away—

Child of Ocean!

Asia. Hark! Spirits speak. The
liquid réponses
Of their aerial tongues yet sound.
Panthea. I hear.

Echoes

O, follow, follow,

As our voice recedeth

Thro' the caverns hollow,

Where the forest spreadeth;

(*More distant*)

O, follow, follow!

Thro' the caverns hollow,

As the song floats thou pursue,

Where the wild bee never flew,

Thro' the noontide darkness deep,

By the odor-breathing sleep

Of faint night-flowers, and the waves

At the fountain-lighted caves,

While our music, wild and sweet,

Mocks thy gently falling feet,

Child of Ocean!

Asia. Shall we pursue the sound? It
grows more faint

And distant.

Panthea. List! the strain floats
nearer now.

Echoes

In the world unknown

Sleeps a voice unspoken;

By thy step alone

Can its rest be broken;

Child of Ocean!

Asia. How the notes sink upon the
ebbing wind!

Echoes

O, follow, follow!

Thro' the caverns hollow,

As the song floats thou pursue,

By the woodland noontide dew;

By the forests, lakes, and fountains

Thro' the many-folded mountains;

To the rents, and gulfs, and chasms,

Where the Earth reposed from spasms,

On the day when He and thou

Parted, to commingle now;

Child of Ocean!

Asia. Come, sweet Panthea, link thy
hand in mine,

And follow, ere the voices fade away.

SCENE II.—A FOREST, INTERMINGLED
WITH ROCKS AND CAVERNS.

ASIA and PANTHEA pass into it. Two
young Fauns are sitting on a Rock
listening.

Semichorus I of Spirits

The path thro' which that lovely twain
 Have past, by cedar, pine, and yew,
 And each dark tree that ever grew,
 Is curtain'd out from Heaven's wide
 blue;
 Nor sun, nor moon, nor wind, nor rain,
 Can pierce its interwoven bowers,
 Nor aught, save where some cloud of
 dew,
 Drifted along the earth-creeping breeze,
 Between the trunks of the hoar trees,
 Hangs each a pearl in the pale
 flowers
 Of the green laurel, blown anew;
 And bends, and then fades silently,
 One frail and fair anemone:
 Or when some star of many a one
 That climbs and wanders thro' steep
 night,
 Has found the cleft thro' which alone
 Beams fall from high those depths upon
 Ere it is borne away, away,
 By the swift Heavens that cannot stay,
 It scatters drops of golden light,
 Like lines of rain that ne'er unite:
 And the gloom divine is all around.
 And underneath is the mossy ground.

Semichorus II

There the voluptuous nightingales,
 Are awake thro' all the broad noon-
 day.
 When one with bliss or sadness fails,
 And thro' the windless ivy-boughs,
 Sick with sweet love, droops dying
 away
 On its mate's music-panting bosom;
 Another from the swinging blossom,
 Watching to catch the languid close
 Of the last strain, then lifts on high
 The wings of the weak melody,
 Till some new strain of feeling bear
 The song, and all the woods are mute;
 When there is heard thro' the dim air
 The rush of wings, and rising there
 Like many a lake-surrounded flute,
 Sounds overflow the listener's brain
 So sweet, that joy is almost pain.

Semichorus I

There those enchanted eddies play
 Of echoes, music-tongued, which
 draw,
 By Demogorgon's mighty law,
 With melting rapture, or sweet awe,
 All spirits on that secret way;
 As inland boats are driven to Ocean

Down streams made strong with moun-
 tain-thaw:

And first there comes a gentle sound
 To those in talk or slumber bound
 And wakes the destined. Soft emotion
 Attracts, impels them: those who saw
 Say from the breathing earth behind
 There steams a plume-uplifting wind
 Which drives them on their path, while
 they

Believe their own swift wings and feet
 The sweet desires within obey:
 And so they float upon their way,
 Until, still sweet, but loud and strong,
 The storm of sound is driven along,
 Sucked up and hurrying: as they
 fleet

Behind, its gathering billows meet
 And to the fatal mountain bear
 Like clouds amid the yielding air.

First Faun. Canst thou imagine
 where those spirits live
 Which make such delicate music in the
 woods?

We haunt within the least frequented
 caves
 And closest coverts, and we know these
 wilds,

Yet never meet them, tho' we hear them
 oft:

Where may they hide themselves?

Second Faun. 'Tis hard to tell:
 I have heard those more skilled in
 spirits say,

The bubbles, which the enchantment of
 the sun

Sucks from the pale faint water-flowers
 that pave

The oozy bottom of clear lakes and
 pools,

Are the pavilions where such dwell and
 float

Under the green and golden atmosphere
 Which noontide kindles thro' the woven
 leaves;

And when these burst, and the thin fiery
 air,

The which they breathed within those
 lucent domes,

Ascends to flow like meteors thro' the
 night,

They ride on them, and rein their head-
 long speed,

And bow their burning crests, and glide
 in fire

Under the waters of the earth again.

First Faun. If such live thus, have
 others other lives,

Under pink blossoms or within the bells

Of meadow flowers, or folded violets
 deep,
 Or on their dying odors, when they
 die,
 Or in the sunlight of the spheréd dew?
Second Faun. Ay, many more which
 we may well divine.
 But, should we stay to speak, noontide
 would come.
 And thwart Silenus find his goats un-
 drawn,
 And grudge to sing those wise and lovely
 songs
 Of fate, and chance, and God, and Chaos
 old,
 And Love, and the chained Titan's woe-
 ful doom,
 And how he shall be loosed, and make
 the earth
 One brotherhood: delightful strains
 which cheer
 Our solitary twilights, and which charm
 To silence the unenvying nightingales.

SCENE III.—A PINNACLE OF ROCK
 AMONG MOUNTAINS. ASIA and PAN-
 THEA.

Panthea. Hither the sound has borne
 us—to the realm
 Of Demogorgon, and the mighty portal,
 Like a volcano's meteor-breathing chasm,
 Whence the oracular vapor is hurled up
 Which lonely men drink wandering in
 their youth,
 And call truth, virtue, love, genius, or
 joy,
 That maddening wine of life, whose
 dregs they drain
 To deep intoxication; and uplift,
 Like Mænads who cry loud, Evøe! Evøe!
 The voice which is contagion to the
 world.

Asia. Fit throne for such a power!
 Magnificent!
 How glorious art thou, Earth! And if
 thou be
 The shadow of some spirit lovelier still,
 Though evil stain its work, and it should
 be
 Like its creation, weak yet beautiful,
 I could fall down and worship that and
 thee.
 Even now my heart adoreth: Wonder-
 ful!
 Look, sister, ere the vapor dim thy
 brain:
 Beneath is a wide plain of billowy mist,
 As a lake, paving in the morning sky,

With azure waves which burst in silver
 light,
 Some Indian vale. Behold it, rolling on
 Under the curdling winds, and islanding
 The peak whereon we stand, midway,
 around,
 Encinctured by the dark and blooming
 forests,
 Dim twilight-lawns, and stream-illum-
 ined caves,
 And wind-enchanted shapes of wander-
 ing mist;
 And far on high the keen sky-cleaving
 mountains
 From icy spires of sun-like radiance fling
 The dawn, as lifted Ocean's dazzling
 spray,
 From some Atlantic islet scattered up,
 Spangles the wind with lamp-like water-
 drops.
 The vale is girdled with their walls, a
 howl
 Of cataracts from their thaw-cloven
 ravines,
 Satiates the listening wind, continuous,
 vast,
 Awful as silence. Hark! the rushing
 snow!
 The sun-awakened avalanche! whose
 mass,
 Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered
 there
 Flake after flake, in heaven-defying
 minds
 As thought by thought is piled, till some
 great truth
 Is loosened, and the nations echo round,
 Shaken to their roots, as do the mountains
 now.

Panthea. Look how the gusty sea of
 mist is breaking
 In crimson foam, even at our feet! it
 rises
 As Ocean at the enchantment of the
 moon
 Round foodless men wrecked on some
 oozy isle.
Asia. The fragments of the cloud are
 scattered up;
 The wind that lifts them disentwines
 my hair;
 Its billows now sweep o'er mine eyes;
 my brain
 Grows dizzy; I see thin shapes within
 the mist.

Panthea. A countenance with beckon-
 ing smiles: there burns
 An azure fire within its golden locks!
 Another and another: hark! they speak!

Song of Spirits

To the deep, to the deep,
 Down, down !
 Through the shade of sleep,
 Through the cloudy strife
 Of Death and of Life ;
 Through the veil and the bar
 Of things which seem and are
 Even to the steps of the remotest throne,
 Down, down !

While the sound whirls around,
 Down, down !
 As the fawn draws the hound,
 As the lightning the vapor,
 As the weak moth the taper ;
 Death, despair ; love, sorrow ;
 Time both ; to-day, to-morrow ;
 As steel obeys the spirit of the stone,
 Down, down !

Through the gray, void abysm,
 Down, down !
 Where the air is no prism,
 And the moon and stars are not,
 And the cavern-crags wear not
 The radiance of Heaven,
 Nor the gloom to Earth given,
 Where there is one pervading, one alone,
 Down, down !

In the depth of the deep,
 Down, down !
 Like veiled lightning asleep,
 Like the spark nursed in embers,
 The last look Love remembers,
 Like a diamond, which shines
 On the dark wealth of mines,
 A spell is treasured but for thee alone,
 Down, down !

We have bound thee, we guide thee ;
 Down, down !
 With the bright form beside thee ;
 Resist not the weakness,
 Such strength is in meekness
 That the Eternal, the Immortal,
 Must unloose through life's portal
 The snake-like Doom coiled underneath
 his throne
 By that alone.

SCENE IV.—THE CAVE OF

DEMOGORGON. ASIA and PANTHEA.

Panthea. What veiled form sits on
 that ebon throne ?

Asia. The veil has fallen.

Panthea. I see a mighty darkness

Filling the seat of power, and rays of
 gloom
 Dart round, as light from the meridian
 sun,
 Ungazed upon and shapeless ; neither
 limb,
 Nor form, nor outline ; yet we feel it is
 A living Spirit.

Demogorgon. Ask what thou wouldst
 know.

Asia. What canst thou tell ?

Demogorgon. All things thou
 dar'st demand.

Asia. Who made the living world ?

Demogorgon. God.

Asia. Who made all
 That it contains ? thought, passion,
 reason, will,

Imagination ?

Demogorgon. God : Almighty God.

Asia. Who made that sense which,
 when the winds of spring
 In rarest visitation, or the voice
 Of one beloved heard in youth alone,
 Fills the faint eyes with falling tears
 which dim

The radiant looks of unbewailing flowers,
 And leaves this peopled earth a solitude
 When it returns no more ?

Demogorgon. Merciful God.

Asia. And who made terror, madness,
 crime, remorse,
 Which from the links of the great chain
 of things,

To every thought within the mind of
 man

Sway and drag heavily, and each one
 reels

Under the load towards the pit of
 death ;

Abandoned hope, and love that turns to
 hate ;

And self-contempt, bitterer to drink
 than blood ;

Pain, whose unheeded and familiar
 speech

Is howling, and keen shrieks, day after
 day ;

And Hell, or the sharp fear of Hell ?

Demogorgon. He reigns.

Asia. Utter his name : a world pining
 in pain

Asks but his name : curses shall drag
 him down.

Demogorgon. He reigns.

Asia. I feel, I know it : who ?

Demogorgon. He reigns.

Asia. Who reigns ? There was the
 Heaven and Earth at first,

And Light and Love ; then Saturn, from
 whose throne
 Time fell, an envious shadow : such the
 state
 Of the earth's primal spirits beneath his
 sway,
 As the calm joy of flowers and living
 leaves
 Before the wind or sun has withered
 them
 And semivital worms ; but he refused
 The birthright of their being, knowledge,
 power,
 The skill which wields the elements,
 the thought
 Which pierces this dim universe like
 light,
 Self-empire, and the majesty of love ;
 For thirst of which they fainted. Then
 Prometheus
 Gave wisdom, which is strength, to
 Jupiter,
 And with this law alone, "Let man be
 free,"
 Clothed him with the dominion of wide
 Heaven,
 To know nor faith, nor love, nor law ; to
 be
 Omnipotent but friendless, is to reign ;
 And Jove now reigned ; for on the race
 of man
 First famine, and then toil, and then
 disease,
 Strife, wounds, and ghastly death unseen
 before,
 Fell ; and the unseasonable seasons
 drove
 With alternating shafts of frost and fire,
 Their shelterless, pale tribes to mountain
 caves :
 And in their desert hearts fierce wants
 he sent,
 And mad disquietudes, and shadows idle
 Of unreal good, which levied mutual
 war,
 So ruining the lair wherein they raged.
 Prometheus saw, and waked the legions
 hopes
 Which sleep within folded Elysian
 flowers,
 Nepenthe, Moly, Amaranth, fadeless
 blooms,
 That they might hide with thin and
 rainbow wings
 The shape of Death ; and Love he sent
 to bind
 The disunited tendrils of that vine
 Which bears the wine of life, the human
 heart ;

And he tamed fire which, like some
 beast of prey,
 Most terrible, but lovely, played beneath
 The frown of man ; and tortured to his
 will
 Iron and gold, the slaves and signs of
 power,
 And gems and poisons, and all subtlest
 forms
 Hidden beneath the mountains and the
 waves.
 He gave man speech, and speech created
 thought,
 Which is the measure of the universe ;
 And Science struck the thrones of earth
 and heaven,
 Which shook, but fell not ; and the
 harmonious mind
 Poured itself forth in all-prophetic song ;
 And music lifted up the listening spirit
 Until it walked, exempt from mortal
 care,
 Godlike, o'er the clear billows of sweet
 sound ;
 And human hands first mimicked and
 then mocked,
 With moulded limbs more lovely than
 its own,
 The human form, till marble grew
 divine ;
 And mothers, gazing, drank the love
 men see
 Reflected in their race, behold, and
 perish.
 He told the hidden power of herbs and
 springs,
 And Disease drank and slept. Death
 grew like sleep.
 He taught the implicated orbits woven
 Of the wide-wandering stars ; and how
 the sun
 Changes his lair, and by what secret
 spell
 The pale moon is transformed, when her
 broad eye
 Gazes not on the interlunar sea :
 He taught to rule, as life directs the
 limbs,
 The tempest-winged chariots of the
 Ocean,
 And the Celt knew the Indian. Cities
 then
 Were built, and through their snow-like
 columns flowed
 The warm winds, and the azure aether
 shone,
 And the blue sea and shadowy hills were
 seen.
 Such, the alleviations of his state,

Prometheus gave to man, for which he hangs

Withering in destined pain: but who rains down

Evil, the immedicable plague, which, while

Man looks on his creation like a God And sees that it is glorious, drives him on

The wreck of his own will, the scorn of earth,

The outcast, the abandoned, the alone? Not Jove: while yet his frown shook

heaven, ay when His adversary from adamantine chains

Cursed him, he trembled like a slave. Declare

Who is his master? Is he too a slave? *Demogorgon.* All spirits are enslaved

which serve things evil: Thou knowest if Jupiter be such or no.

Asia. Whom called'st thou God? *Demogorgon.* I spoke but as ye

speak, For Jove is the supreme of living things. *Asia.* Who is the master of the slave?

Demogorgon. If the abyss Could vomit forth its secrets. . . But a

voice Is wanting, the deep truth is imageless; For what would it avail to bid thee gaze

On the revolving world? What to bid speak

Fate, Time, Occasion, Chance, and Change? To these

All things are subject but eternal Love. *Asia.* So much I asked before, and

my heart gave The response thou hast given; and of

such truths Each to itself must be the oracle.

One more demand; and do thou answer me

As mine own soul would answer, did it know

That which I ask. Prometheus shall arise

Henceforth the sun of this rejoicing world:

When shall the destined hour arrive? *Demogorgon.* Behold!

Asia. The rocks are cloven, and through the purple night

I see cars drawn by rainbow-winged steeds

Which trample the dim winds: in each there stands

A wild-eyed charioteer urging their flight.

Some look behind, as fiends pursued them there.

And yet I see no shapes but the keen stars:

Others, with burning eyes, lean forth, and drink

With eager lips the wind of their own speed,

As if the thing they loved fled on before, And now, even now, they clasped it.

Their bright locks Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they

all Sweep onward. *Demogorgon.* These are the immortal

Hours, Of whom thou didst demand. One

waits for thee. *Asia.* A spirit with a dreadful coun-

tenance Checks its dark chariot by the craggy

gulf. Unlike thy brethren, ghastly charioteer,

Who art thou? Whither wouldst thou bear me? Speak!

Spirit. I am the shadow of a destiny More dread than is my aspect: ere yon

planet Has set, the darkness which ascends

with me Shall wrap in lasting night heaven's

kingless throne. *Asia.* What meanest thou?

Panthea. That terrible shadow floats

Up from its throne, as may the lurid smoke

Of earthquake-ruined cities o'er the sea. Lo! it ascends the car; the coursers fly

Terrified: watch its path among the stars

Blackening the night! *Asia.* Thus I am answered;

strange! *Panthea.* See, near the verge, another

chariot stays; An ivory shell inlaid with crimson fire,

Which comes and goes within its sculptured rim

Of delicate strange tracery; the young spirit

That guides it has the dove-like eyes of hope;

How its soft smiles attract the soul! as light

Lures winged insects through the lampless air.

Spirit My coursers are fed with the lightning,

They drink of the whirlwind's stream,
 And when the red morning is brightning
 They bathe in the fresh sunbeam;
 They have strength for their swiftness
 I deem,
 Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

I desire; and their speed makes night
 kindle;

I fear: they outstrip the Typhoon;
 Ere the cloud piled on Atlas can dwindle
 We encircle the earth and the moon:
 We shall rest from long labors at noon:
 Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

SCENE V.—THE CAR PAUSES WITHIN
 A CLOUD ON THE TOP OF A SNOWY
 MOUNTAIN. ASIA, PANTHEA, and the
 SPIRIT OF THE HOUR.

Spirit

On the brink of the night and the
 morning

My coursers are wont to respire;
 But the Earth has just whispered a warn-
 ing

That their flight must be swifter than
 fire:

They shall drink the hot speed of
 desire!

Asia. Thou breathest on their nostrils,
 but my breath

Would give them swifter speed.

Spirit. Alas! it could not.

Panthea. Oh Spirit! pause, and tell
 whence is the light

Which fills the cloud? the sun is yet
 unrisen.

Spirit. The sun will rise not until
 noon. Apollo

Is held in heaven by wonder; and the
 light

Which fills this vapor, as the ærial hue
 Of fountain-gazing roses fills the water,
 Flows from thy mighty sister.

Panthea. Yes, I feel—

Asia. What is it with thee, sister?
 Thou art pale.

Panthea. How thou art changed! I
 dare not look on thee;

I feel but see thee not. I scarce endure
 The radiance of thy beauty. Some good
 change

Is working in the elements, which suffer
 Thy presence thus unveiled. The Ne-
 reids tell

That on the day when the clear hyaline
 Was cloven at thy uprise, and thou didst
 stand

Within a veined shell, which floated on
 Over the calm floor of the crystal sea,
 Among the Ægean isles, and by the
 shores

Which bear thy name; love, like the
 atmosphere

Of the sun's fire filling the living world,
 Burst from thee, and illumined earth
 and heaven

And the deep ocean and the sunless
 caves

And all that dwells within them; till
 grief cast

Eclipse upon the soul from which it
 came:

Such art thou now; nor is it I alone,
 Thy sister, thy companion, thine own
 chosen one,

But the whole world which seeks thy
 sympathy.

Hearst thou not sounds i' the air which
 speak the love

Of all articulate beings? Feelest thou
 not

The inanimate winds enamored of thee?
 List! (*Music.*)

Asia. Thy words are sweeter than
 aught else but his

Whose echoes they are: yet all love is
 sweet,

Given or returned. Common as light
 is love,

And its familiar voice wearies not ever.
 Like the wide heaven, the all-sustaining
 air,

It makes the reptile equal to the God:
 They who inspire it most are fortunate,

As I am now; but those who feel it most
 Are happier still, after long sufferings,

As I shall soon become.

Panthea. List! Spirits speak.

Voice in the Air Singing

Life of Life! thy lips enkindle

With their love the breath between
 them;

And thy smiles before they dwindle
 Make the cold air fire; then screen
 them

In those looks, where whoso gazes
 Faints, entangled in their mazes.

Child of Light! thy limbs are burning
 Thro' the vest which seems to hide
 them;

As the radiant lines of morning
 Thro' the clouds ere they divide them;

And this atmosphere divinest
 Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou shinest.

Fair are others ; none beholds thee,
 But thy voice sounds low and tender
 Like the fairest, for it folds thee
 From the sight, that liquid splendor,
 And all feel, yet see thee never,
 As I feel now, lost for ever !

Lamp of Earth ! where'er thou movest
 Its dim shapes are clad with bright-
 ness,
 And the souls of whom thou lovest
 Walk upon the winds with lightness,
 Till they fail, as I am failing,
 Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing !

Asia

My soul is an enchanted boat,
 Which, like a sleeping swan, doth
 float
 Upon the silver waves of thy sweet
 singing ;
 And thine doth like an angel sit
 Beside a helm conducting it,
 Whilst all the winds with melody are
 ringing.
 It seems to float ever, for ever,
 Upon that many-winding river,
 Between mountains, woods, abysses,
 A paradise of wildernesses !
 Till, like one in slumber bound,
 Borne to the ocean, I float down,
 around,
 Into a sea profound, of ever-spreading
 sound :

Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions
 In music's most serene dominions :
 Catching the winds that fan that happy
 heaven.
 And we sail on, away, afar,
 Without a course, without a star,
 But, by the instinct of sweet music
 driven ;
 Till through Elysian garden islets
 By thee, most beautiful of pilots,
 Where never mortal pinnacle glided,
 The boat of my desire is guided :
 Realms where the air we breathe is
 love,
 Which in the winds and on the waves
 doth move,
 Harmonizing this earth with what we
 feel above.

We have pass'd Age's icy caves,
 And Manhood's dark and tossing
 waves,
 And Youth's smooth ocean, smiling to
 betray :

Beyond the glassy gulfs we flee
 Of shadow-peopled Infancy,
 Through Death and Birth, to a diviner
 day ;
 A paradise of vaulted bowers,
 Lit by downward-gazing flowers,
 And watery paths that wind between
 Wildernesses calm and green,
 Peopled by shapes too bright to see,
 And rest, having beheld ; somewhat
 like thee :
 Which walk upon the sea, and chant
 melodiously !

ACT III

SCENE I.—HEAVEN. JUPITER *on
 his Throne* ; THETIS *and the other
 Deities assembled*.

Jupiter. Ye congregated powers of
 heaven, who share
 The glory and the strength of him ye
 serve,
 Rejoice ! henceforth I am omnipotent.
 All else had been subdued to me ; alone
 The soul of man, like unextinguished fire,
 Yet burns towards heaven with fierce
 reproach, and doubt,
 And lamentation, and reluctant prayer,
 Hurling up insurrection, which might
 make
 Our antique empire insecure, though
 built
 On eldest faith, and hell's coeval, fear ;
 And tho' my curses thro' the pendulous
 air,
 Like snow on herbless peaks, fall flake
 by flake,
 And cling to it ; tho' under my wrath's
 night
 It climbs the crags of life, step after step,
 Which wound it, as ice wounds unsan-
 dall'd feet,
 It yet remains supreme o'er misery,
 Aspiring, unrepres'd, yet soon to fall :
 Even now have I begotten a strange
 wonder,
 That fatal child, the terror of the earth,
 Who waits but till the destined hour
 arrive,
 Bearing from Demogorgon's vacant
 throne
 The dreadful might of ever-living limbs
 Which clothed that awful spirit un-
 beheld,
 To redescend, and trample out the spark.
 Pour forth heaven's wine, Idæan Gany
 mede,

And let it fill the Dædal cups like fire,
And from the flower-inwoven soil divine
Ye all-triumphant harmonies arise,
As dew from earth under the twilight
stars :

Drink ! be the nectar circling thro' your
veins

The soul of joy, ye ever-living Gods,
Till exultation burst in one wide voice
Like music from Elysian winds.

And thou
Ascend beside me, veiled in the light
Of the desire which makes thee one with
me,

Thetis, bright image of eternity !
When thou didst cry, "Insufferable
night !

God ! Spare me ! I sustain not the quick
flames,

The penetrating presence ; all my being,
Like him whom the Numidian seps did
thaw

Into a dew with poison, is dissolved,
Sinking thro' its foundations : "even then
Two mighty spirits, mingling, made a
third

Mightier than either, which, unbodied
now,

Between us floats, felt, although unbe-
held,

Waiting the incarnation, which ascends,
(Hear ye the thunder of the fiery wheels
Grinding the winds ?) from Demogorgon's
throne.

Victory ! victory ! Feel'st thou not, O
world,

The earthquake of his chariot thunder-
ing up

Olympus ?

[*The Car of the HOUR arrives.
DEMOGORGON descends, and moves
towards the Throne of JUPITER.*

Awful shape, what art thou ?

Speak !

Demogorgon. Eternity. Demand no
diver name.

Descend, and follow me down the abyss.
I am thy child, as thou wert Saturn's
child ;

Mightier than thee : and we must dwell
together

Henceforth in darkness. Lift thy light-
nings not.

The tyranny of heaven none may retain,
Or reassume, or hold, succeeding thee :

Yet if thou wilt, as 'tis the destiny
Of trodden worms to writhe till they
are dead,

Put forth thy might.

Jupiter. Detested prodigy !
Even thus beneath the deep Titanian
prisons

I trample thee ! thou lingerest ?

Mercy ! mercy !
No pity, no release, no respite ! Oh,
That thou wouldst make mine enemy
my judge,

Even where he hangs, seared by my
long revenge,

On Caucasus ! he would not doom me
thus.

Gentle, and just, and dreadful, is he
not

The monarch of the world ? What then
art thou ?

No refuge ! no appeal !

Sink with me then,
We too will sink on the wide waves of
ruin,

Even as a vulture and a snake outspent
Drop, twisted in inextricable fight,
Into a shoreless sea. Let hell unlock
Its mounded oceans of tempestuous fire,
And whelm on them into the bottomless
void

This desolated world, and thee, and me,
The conqueror and the conquered, and
the wreck

Of that for which they combated.

Ai ! Ai !
The elements obey me not. I sink
Dizzily down, ever, for ever, down.
And, like a cloud, mine enemy above
Darkens my fall with victory ! Ai, Ai !

SCENE II.—THE MOUTH OF A GREAT
RIVER IN THE ISLAND ATLANTIS. OCEAN
is discovered reclining near the Shore ;
APOLLO stands beside him.

Ocean. He fell, thou sayest, beneath
his conqueror's frown ?

Apollo. Aye, when the strife was
ended which made dim

The orb I rule, and shook the solid stars,
The terrors of his eye illumined heaven
With sanguine light, through the thick
ragged skirts

Of the victorious darkness, as he fell :
Like the last glare of day's red agony,
Which, from a rent among the fiery
clouds,

Burns far along the tempest-wrinkled
deep.

Ocean. He sunk to the abyss ? To the
dark void ?

Apollo. An eagle so caught in some
bursting cloud

On Caucasus, his thunder-baffled wings
Entangled in the whirlwind, and his
eyes

Which gazed on the undazzling sun,
now blinded

By the white lightning, while the ponderous hail

Beats on his struggling form, which
sinks at length

Prone, and the ærial ice clings over it.
Ocean. Henceforth the fields of
Heaven-reflecting sea

Which are my realm, will heave, unstained with blood,

Beneath the uplifting winds, like plains
of corn

Swayed by the summer air; my streams
will flow

Round many-peopled continents, and
round

Fortunate isles; and from their glassy
thrones

Blue Proteus and his humid nymphs
shall mark

The shadow of fair ships, as mortals see
The floating bark of the light-laden
moon

With that white star, its sightless pilot's
crest,

Borne down the rapid sunset's ebbing
sea;

Tracking their path no more by blood
and groans,

And desolation, and the mingled voice
Of slavery and command! but by the
light

Of wave-reflected flowers, and floating
odors,

And music soft, and mild, free, gentle
voices,

And sweetest music, such as spirits love.
Apollo. And I shall gaze not on the
deeds which make

My mind obscure with sorrow, as eclipse
Darkens the sphere I guide; but list, I
hear

The small, clear, silver lute of the young
Spirit

That sits i' the morning star.
Ocean. Thou must away;

Thy steeds will pause at even, till when
farewell:

The loud deep calls me home. even now
to feed it

With azure calm out of the emerald
urns

Which stand for ever full beside my
throne.

Behold the Nereids under the green sea,

Their wavering limbs borne on the wind-
like stream,

Their white arms lifted o'er their stream-
ing hair

With garlands pied and starry sea-flower
crowns,

Hastening to grace their mighty sister's
joy. [*A sound of waves is heard.*]

It is the unpastured sea hungering for
calm.

Peace, monster; I come now. Fare-
well.

Apollo.

Farewell.

SCENE III.—CAUCASUS. PROMETHEUS.
HERCULES, IONE, the EARTH, SPIRITS,
ASIA, and PANTHEA, borne
in the Car with the SPIRIT OF THE
HOUR. HERCULES unbinds PROME-
THEUS, who descends.

Hercules. Most glorious among
spirits, thus doth strength

To wisdom, courage, and long-suffering
love,

And thee, who art the form they ani-
mate,

Minister like a slave.

Prometheus. Thy gentle words
Are sweeter even than freedom long
desired

And long delayed.

Asia, thou light of life,
Shadow of beauty unbelied: and ye,

Fair sister nymphs, who made long
years of pain

Sweet to remember, thro' your love and
care:

Henceforth we will not part. There is
a cave,

All overgrown with trailing odorous
plants,

Which curtain out the day with leaves
and flowers,

And paved with veined emerald, and a
fountain

Leaps in the midst with an awakening
sound.

From its curved roof the mountain's
frozen tears

Like snow, or silver, or long diamond
spires,

Hang downward, raining forth a doubt-
ful light:

And there is heard the ever-moving air,
Whispering without from tree to tree,

and birds,
And bees; and all around are mossy
seats,

And the rough walls are clothed with
 long soft grass ;
 A simple dwelling, which shall be our
 own ;
 Where we will sit and talk of time and
 change,
 As the world ebbs and flows, ourselves
 unchanged.
 What can hide man from mutability ?
 And if ye sigh, then I will smile ; and
 thou,
 Ione, shalt chant fragments of sea-
 music,
 Until I weep, when ye shall smile away
 The tears she brought, which yet were
 sweet to shed.
 We will entangle buds and flowers and
 beams
 Which twinkle on the fountain's brim,
 and make
 Strange combinations out of common
 things,
 Like human babes in their brief inno-
 cence ;
 And we will search, with looks and
 words of love,
 For hidden thoughts, each lovelier than
 the last,
 Our unexhausted spirits ; and like lutes
 Touched by the skill of the enamored
 wind,
 Weave harmonies divine, yet ever new,
 From difference sweet where discord
 cannot be ;
 And hither come, sped on the charmed
 winds,
 Which meet from all the points of
 heaven, as bees
 From every flower aerial Enna feeds,
 At their known island-homes in Himera,
 The echoes of the human world, which
 tell
 Of the low voice of love, almost un-
 heard,
 And dove-eyed pity's murmured pain,
 and music,
 Itself the echo of the heart, and all
 That tempers or improves man's life,
 now free ;
 And lovely apparitions, dim at first,
 Then radiant, as the mind, arising
 bright
 From the embrace of beauty, whence
 the forms
 Of which these are the phantoms, cast
 on them
 The gathered rays which are reality,
 Shall visit us, the progeny immortal
 Of Painting, Sculpture, and rapt Poesy,

And arts, tho' unimagined, yet to be.
 The wandering voices and the shadows
 these

Of all that man becomes, the mediators
 Of that best worship love, by him and us
 Given and returned ; swift shapes and
 sounds, which grow

More fair and soft as man grows wise
 and kind,

And, veil by veil, evil and error fall :
 Such virtue has the cave and place
 around.

[Turning to the Spirit of the Hour,

For thee, fair Spirit, one toil remains.
 Ione,

Give her that curv'd shell, which Pro-
 teus old

Made Asia's nuptial boon, breathing
 within it

A voice to be accomplished, and which
 thou

Didst hide in grass under the hollow
 rock.

Ione. Thou most desired Hour, more
 loved and lovely

Than all thy sisters, this is the mystic
 shell ;

See the pale azure fading into silver
 Lining it with a soft yet glowing light :
 Looks it not like lulled music sleeping
 there ?

Spirit. It seems in truth the fairest
 shell of Ocean :

Its sounds must be at once both sweet
 and strange.

Prometheus. Go, borne over the
 cities of mankind

On whirlwind-footed coursers : once
 again

Outspeed the sun around the orb'd world ;
 And as thy chariot cleaves the kindling
 air,

Thou breathe into the many-folded shell,
 Loosening its mighty music ; it shall be
 As thunder mingled with clear echoes :
 then

Return ; and thou shalt dwell beside our
 cave.

And thou, O, Mother Earth !—

The Earth. I hear, I feel ;

Thy lips are on me, and thy touch runs
 down

Even to the adamant central gloom
 Along these marble nerves ; 'tis life, 'tis
 joy,

And through my withered, old and icy
 frame

The warmth of an immortal youth shoots
 down

Circling. Henceforth the many children
fair

Folded in my sustaining arms ; all
plants,

And creeping forms, and insects rain-
bow-winged,

And birds, and beasts, and fish, and
human shapes,

Which drew disease and pain from my
wan bosom,

Draining the poison of despair, shall
take

And interchange sweet nutriment ; to me
Shall they become like sister antelopes

By one fair dam, snow-white and swift
as wind,

Nursed among lilies near a brimming
stream.

The dew-mists of my sunless sleep shall
float

Under the stars like balm : night-folded
flowers

Shall suck unwithering hues in their
repose :

And men and beasts in happy dreams
shall gather

Strength for the coming day, and all its
joy :

And death shall be the last embrace of
her

Who takes the life she gave, even as a
mother

Folding her child, says, " Leave me not
again."

Asia. Oh, mother ! wherefore speak
the name of death ?

Cease they to love, and move, and
breathe, and speak,

Who die ?

The Earth. It would avail not to
reply :

Thou art immortal, and this tongue is
known

But to the uncommunicating dead.

Death is the veil which those who live
call life :

They sleep, and it is lifted : and mean-
while

In mild variety the seasons mild

With rainbow-skirted showers, and
odorous winds,

And long blue meteors cleansing the
dull night,

And the life-kindling shafts of the keen
sun's

All-piercing bow, and the dew-mingled
rain

Of the calm moonbeams, a soft influence
mild.

Shall clothe the forests and the fields,
ay, even

The crag-built deserts of the barren deep,
With ever-living leaves, and fruits, and
flowers.

And thou ! There is a cavern where my
spirit

Was panted forth in anguish whilst thy
pain

Made my heart mad, and those who did
inhale it

Became mad too, and built a temple
there,

And spoke, and were oracular, and lured
The erring nations round to mutual war,

And faithless faith, such as Jove kept
with thee ;

Which breath now rises, as amongst tall
weeds

A violet's exhalation, and it fills

With a serener light and crimson air

Intense, yet soft, the rocks and woods
around ;

It feeds the quick growth of the serpent
vine,

And the dark linked ivy tangling wild,
And budding, blown, or odor-faded
blooms

Which star the winds with points of
colored light,

As they rain thro' them, and bright
golden globes

Of fruit, suspended in their own green
heaven,

And thro' their veined leaves and amber
stems

The flowers whose purple and trans-
lucid bowls

Stand ever mantling with ærial dew,
The drink of spirits : and it circles
round,

Like the soft waving wings of noonday
dreams,

Inspiring calm and happy thoughts, like
mine,

Now thou art thus restored. This cave
is thine.

Arise ! Appear !

[*A Spirit rises in the likeness of
a winged child.*

This is my torch-bearer :

Who let his lamp out in old time with
gazing

On eyes from which he kindled it anew
With love, which is as fire, sweet
daughter mine,

For such is that within thine own. Run,
wayward,

And guide this company beyond the peak

Of Bacchic Nysa, Mænad-haunted mountain,
And beyond Indus and its tribute rivers,
Trampling the torrent streams and glassy lakes

With feet unwet, unwearied, undelaying,
And up the green ravine, across the vale,
Beside the windless and crystalline pool,
Where ever lies, on unerasing waves,
The image of a temple, built above,
Distinct with column, arch, and architrave,

And palm-like capital, and over-wrought
And populous most with living imagery,
Praxitelean shapes, whose marble smiles
Fill the hushed air with everlasting love.
It is deserted now, but once it bore
Thy name, Prometheus; there the emulous youths

Bore to thy honor thro' the divine gloom
The lamp which was thine emblem;
even as those

Who bear the untransmitted torch of hope

Into the grave, across the night of life,
As thou hast borne it most triumphantly
To this far goal of Time. Depart, farewell.

Beside that temple is the destined cave.

SCENE IV. A FOREST. IN THE BACKGROUND A CAVE, PROMETHEUS, ASIA, PANTHEA, IONE, and the SPIRIT OF THE EARTH.

Ione. Sister, it is not earthly : how it glides

Under the leaves ! how on its head there burns

A light, like a green star, whose emerald beams

Are twined with its fair hair ! how, as it moves,

The splendor drops in flakes upon the grass !

Knowest thou it ?

Panthea. It is the delicate spirit
That guides the earth thro' heaven.
From afar

The populous constellations call that light

The loveliest of the planets ; and sometimes

It floats along the spray of the salt sea,
Or makes its chariot of a foggy cloud,

Or walks thro' fields or cities while men sleep,

Or o'er the mountain tops, or down the rivers

Or thro' the green waste wilderness, ^{as now,}

Wondering at all it sees. Before Jove reigned

It loved our sister Asia, and it came
Each leisure hour to drink the liquid light

Out of her eyes, for which it said it thirsted

As one bit by a dipsas, and with her
It made its childish confidence, and told her

All it had known or seen, for it saw much,

Yet idly reasoned what it saw ; and called her—

For whence it sprung it knew not, nor do I—

Mother, dear mother.

The Spirit of the Earth (running to Asia). Mother, dearest mother ;

May I then talk with thee as I was wont ?

May I then hide my eyes in thy soft arms,

After thy looks have made them tired of joy ?

May I then play beside thee the long noons.

When work is none in the bright silent air ?

Asia. I love thee, gentlest being, and henceforth

Can cherish thee unenvied : speak, I pray :

Thy simple talk once solaced, now delights.

Spirit of the Earth. Mother, I am grown wiser, though a child

Cannot be wise like thee, within this day ;

And happier too ; happier and wiser both.
Thou knowest that toads, and snakes,

and loathly worms,
And venomous and malicious beasts,

and boughs
That bore ill berries in the woods, were ever

An hindrance to my walks o'er the green world :

And that, among the haunts of human-kind,

Hard-featured men, or with proud, angry looks,

Or cold, staid gait, or false and hollow smiles,

Or the dull sneer of self-loved ignorance,
Or other such foul masks, with which

ill thoughts

Hide that fair being whom we spirits
 call man ;
 And women too, ugliest of all things
 evil,
 (Tho' fair, even in a world where thou
 art fair,
 When good and kind, free and sincere
 like thee),
 When false or frowning made me sick
 at heart
 To pass them, tho' they slept, and I un-
 seen.
 Well, my path lately lay thro' a great
 city
 Into the woody hills surrounding it :
 A sentinel was sleeping at the gate :
 When there was heard a sound, so loud
 it shook
 The towers amid the moonlight, yet
 more sweet
 Than any voice but thine, sweetest of
 all ;
 A long, long sound, as it would never
 end :
 And all the inhabitants leapt suddenly
 Out of their rest, and gathered in the
 streets,
 Looking in wonder up to Heaven, while
 yet
 The music pealed along. I hid myself
 Within a fountain in the public square,
 Where I lay like the reflex of the moon
 Seen in a wave under green leaves ; and
 soon
 Those ugly human shapes and visages
 Of which I spoke as having wrought me
 pain,
 Passed floating thro' the air, and fading
 still
 Into the winds that scattered them ; and
 those
 From whom they passed seemed mild
 and lovely forms
 After some foul disguise had fallen, and
 all
 Were somewhat changed, and after brief
 surprise
 And greetings of delighted wonder, all
 Went to their sleep again : and when
 the dawn
 Came, would'st thou think that toads,
 and snakes, and efts,
 Could e'er be beautiful ? yet so they were,
 And that with little change of shape or
 hue :
 All things had put their evil nature off ;
 I cannot tell my joy, when o'er a lake
 Upon a drooping bough with night-
 shade twined,

I saw two azure halcyons clinging down-
 ward
 And thinning one bright bunch of
 amber berries.
 With quick long beaks, and in the deep
 there lay
 Those lovely forms imaged as in a sky ;
 So, with my thoughts full of these happy
 changes,
 We meet again, the happiest change of
 all.

Asia. And never will we part, till
 thy chaste sister
 Who guides the frozen and inconstant
 moon
 Will look on thy more warm and equal
 light
 Till her heart thaw like flakes of April
 snow
 And love thee.

Spirit of the Earth. What ; as
Asia loves Prometheus ?

Asia. Peace, wanton, thou art yet
 not old enough.

Think ye by gazing on each other's eyes
 To multiply your lovely selves, and fill
 With spheréd fires the interlunar air ?

Spirit of the Earth. Nay, mother,
 while my sister trims her lamp
 'Tis hard I should go darkling.

Asia. Listen ; look !

The SPIRIT OF THE HOUR enters.

Prometheus. We feel what thou hast
 heard and seen ; yet speak.

Spirit of the Hour. Soon as the sound
 had ceased whose thunder filled
 The abysses of the sky and the wide earth,
 There was a change : the impalpable
 thin air

And the all-circling sunlight were trans-
 formed,

As if the sense of love dissolved in them
 Had folded itself round the spheréd
 world.

My vision then grew clear, and I could
 see

Into the mysteries of the universe :
 Dizzy as with delight I floated down ;
 Winnowing the lightsome air with lan-
 guid plumes,

My coursers sought their birthplace in
 the sun,

Where they henceforth will live exempt
 from toil

Pasturing flowers of vegetable fire ;
 And where my moonlike car will stand
 within

A temple, gazed upon by Phidian forms

Of thee, and Asia, and the Earth, and
me,
And you fair nymphs looking the love
we feel,—
In memory of the tidings it has borne,—
Beneath a dome fretted with graven
flowers,
Poised on twelve columns of resplendent
stone,
And open to the bright and liquid sky.
Yoked to it by an amphisbenic snake
The likeness of those winged steeds will
mock
The flight from which they find repose.
Alas,
Whither has wandered now my partial
tongue
When all remains untold which ye
would hear?
As I have said I floated to the earth:
It was, as it is still, the pain of bliss
To move, to breathe, to be; I wander-
ing went
Among the haunts and dwellings of
mankind,
And first was disappointed not to see
Such mighty change as I had felt within
Expressed in outward things; but soon
I looked,
And behold, thrones were kingless, and
men walked
One with the other even as spirits do,
None fawned, none trampled; hate,
disdain, or fear,
Self-love or self-contempt, on human
brows,
No more inscribed, as o'er the gate of
hell,
"All hope abandon ye who enter here;"
None frowned, none trembled, none
with eager fear
Gazed on another's eye of cold command,
Until the subject of the tyrant's will
Became, worse fate, the abject of his
own,
Which spurred him, like an outspent
horse, to death.
None wrought his lips in truth-entang-
ling lines
Which smiled the lie his tongue dis-
dained to speak;
None, with firm sneer, trod out in his
own heart
The sparks of love and hope till there
remained
Those bitter ashes, a soul self-consumed,
And the wretch crept a vampire among
men,
Infecting all with his own hideous ill;

None talked that common, false, cold,
hollow talk
Which makes the heart deny the *yes* it
breathes,
Yet question that unmeant hypocrisy
With such a self-mistrust as has no
name.
And women, too, frank, beautiful, and
kind
As the free heaven which rains fresh
light and dew
On the wide earth, passed; gentle radi-
ant forms,
From custom's evil taint exempt and
pure;
Speaking the wisdom once they could
not think,
Looking emotions once they feared to
feel,
And changed to all which once they
dared not be,
Yet being now, made earth like heaven;
nor pride,
Nor jealousy, nor envy, nor ill shame,
The bitterest of those drops of treasured
gall,
Spoilt the sweet taste of the nepenthe,
love.
Thrones, altars, judgment-seats, and
prisons, wherein,
And beside which, by wretched men
were borne
Sceptres, tiaras, swords, and chains,
and tomes
Of reasoned wrong, glozed on by ignor-
ance,
Were like those monstrous and barbaric
shapes,
The ghosts of a no more remembered
fame,
Which, from their unworn obelisks,
look forth
In triumph o'er the palaces and tombs
Of those who were their conquerors:
mouldering round
Those imaged to the pride of kings and
priests,
A dark yet mighty faith, a power as
wide
As is the world it wasted, and are now
But an astonishment; even so the tools
And emblems of its last captivity,
Amid the dwellings of the peopled
earth,
Stand, not o'erthrown, but unregarded
now.
And those foul shapes, abhorred by god
and man,

Which, under many a name and many a form,
 Strange, savage, ghastly, dark and execrable,
 Were Jupiter, the tyrant of the world;
 And which the nations, panic-stricken, served
 With blood, and hearts broken by long hope, and love
 Dragged to his altars soiled and garlandless,
 And slain among men's unreclaiming tears,
 Flattering the thing they feared, which fear was hate,
 Frown, mouldering fast, o'er their abandoned shrines:
 The painted veil, by those who were, called life,
 Which mimicked, as with colors idly spread,
 All men believed and hoped, is torn aside;
 The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
 Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
 Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
 Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
 Over himself; just, gentle, wise: but man
 Passionless; no, yet free from guilt or pain,
 Which were, for his will made or suffered them,
 Nor yet exempt, tho' ruling them like slaves,
 From chance, and death, and mutability,
 The clogs of that which else might over-soar
 The loftiest star of unascended heaven,
 Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.

ACT IV

SCENE, A PART OF THE FOREST NEAR THE CAVE OF PROMETHEUS. PANTHEA and IONE are sleeping: they awaken gradually during the first Song.

Voice of unseen Spirits

The pale stars are gone!
 For the sun, their swift shepherd,
 To their folds them compelling,
 In the depths of the dawn,
 Hastes, in meteor-eclipsing array, and they flee

Beyond his blue dwelling,
 As fawns flee the leopard.
 But where are ye?

A Train of dark Forms and Shadows passes by confusedly, singing.

Here, oh, here:
 We bear the bier
 Of the Father of many a cancelled year!
 Spectres we
 Of the dead Hours be,
 We bear Time to his tomb in eternity.

Strew, oh, strew
 Hair, not yew!
 Wet the dusty pall with tears, not dew!
 Be the faded flowers
 Of Death's bare bowers
 Spread on the corpse of the King of Hours!

Haste, oh, haste!
 As shades are chased,
 Trembling, by day, from heaven's blue waste.
 We melt away,
 Like dissolving spray,
 From the children of a diviner day,
 With the lullaby
 Of winds that die
 On the bosom of their own harmony!

Ione

What dark forms were they?

Panthea

The past Hours weak and gray,
 With the spoil which their toil
 Raked together
 From the conquest but One could foil.

Ione

Have they past?

Panthea

They have past;
 They outspeeded the blast,
 While 'tis said, they are fled:

Ione

Whither, oh, whither?

Panthea

To the dark, to the past, to the dead.

Voice of unseen Spirits

Bright clouds float in heaven,
 Dew-stars gleam on earth,
 Waves assemble on ocean,
 They are gathered and driven

By the storm of delight, by the panic of
glee!

They shake with emotion,
They dance in their mirth.
But where are ye?

The pine boughs are singing
Old songs with new gladness,
The billows and fountains
Fresh music are flinging,
Like the notes of a spirit from land and
from sea;

The storms mock the mountains
With the thunder of gladness.
But where are ye?

Ione. What charioteers are these?
Panthea. Where are their
chariots?

Semichorus of Hours

'The voice of the Spirits of Air and of
Earth
Have drawn back the figured curtain
of sleep
Which covered our being and darkened
our birth
In the deep.

A Voice

In the deep?

Semichorus II

Oh, below the deep.

Semichorus I

An hundred ages we had been kept
Cradled in visions of hate and care,
And each one who waked as his brother
slept,
Found the truth—

Semichorus II

Worse than his visions were!

Semichorus I

We have heard the lute of Hope in sleep;
We have known the voice of Love in
dreams,
We have felt the wand of Power, and
leap—

Semichorus II

As the billows leap in the morning
beams!

Chorus

Weave the dance on the floor of the
breeze,
Pierce with song heaven's silent light,

Enchant the day that too swiftly flees,
To check its flight ere the cave of
night.

Once the hungry Hours were hounds
Which chased the day like a bleeding
deer,
And it limped and stumbled with many
wounds
Through the nightly dells of the
desert year.

But now, oh weave the mystic measure
Of music, and dance, and shapes of
light,
Let the Hours, and the spirits of might
and pleasure,
Like the clouds and sunbeams, unite.

A Voice

Unite!

Panthea. See, where the Spirits of
the human mind
Wrapt in sweet sounds, as in bright veils,
approach.

Chorus of Spirits

We join the throng
Of the dance and the song,
By the whirlwind of gladness borne
along;
As the flying-fish leap
From the Indian deep,
And mix with the sea-birds, half asleep.

Chorus of Hours

Whence come ye, so wild and so fleet,
For sandals of lightning are on your
feet,
And your wings are soft and swift as
thought,
And your eyes are as love which is veiled
not?

Chorus of Spirits

We come from the mind
Of human kind
Which was late so dusk, and obscene,
and blind,
Now 'tis an ocean
Of clear emotion,
A heaven of serene and mighty motion;

From that deep abyss
Of wonder and bliss,
Whose caverns are crystal palaces;
From those skiey towers
Where Thought's crowned powers
Sit watching your dance, ye happy
Hours!

From the dim recesses
Of woven caresses,
Where lovers catch ye by your loose
tresses;
From the azure isles,
Where sweet Wisdom smiles,
Delaying your ships with her siren
wiles.

From the temples high
Of Man's ear and eye,
Roofed over Sculpture and Poesy;
From the murmurings
Of the unsealed springs
Where Science bedews his Dædal wings.

Years after years,
Through blood, and tears,
And a thick hell of hatreds, and hopes,
and fears;
We waded and flew,
And the islets were few
Where the bud-blighted flowers of hap-
piness grew.

Our feet now, every palm,
Are sandalled with calm,
And the dew of our wings is a rain of
balm;
And, beyond our eyes,
The human love lies
Which makes all it gazes on Paradise.

Chorus of Spirits and Hours

Then weave the web of the mystic
measure;
From the depths of the sky and the ends
of the earth,
Come, swift Spirits of might and of
pleasure,
Fill the dance and the music of mirth,
As the waves of a thousand streams
rush by
To an ocean of splendor and harmony!

Chorus of Spirits

Our spoil is won,
Our task is done,
We are free to dive, or soar, or run;
Beyond and around,
Or within the bound
Which clips the world with darkness
round.

We'll pass the eyes
Of the starry skies
Into the hoar deep to colonise:
Death, Chaos, and Night,

From the sound of our flight,
Shall flee, like mist from a tempest's
might.

And Earth, Air, and Light,
And the Spirit of Might,
Which drives round the stars in their
fiery flight;
And Love, Thought, and Breath,
The powers that quell Death,
Wherever we soar shall assemble be-
neath.

And our singing shall build
In the void's loose field
A world for the Spirit of Wisdom to
wield:
We will take our plan
From the new world of man,
And our work shall be called the Pro-
methean.

Chorus of Hours

Break the dance, and scatter the song;
Let some depart, and some remain.

Semichorus I

We, beyend heaven, are driven along!

Semichorus II

Us the enchantments of earth retain:

Semichorus I

Ceaseless, and rapid, and fierce, and free,
With the Spirits which build a new earth
and sea,
And a heaven where yet heaven could
never be.

Semichorus II

Solemn, and slow, and serene, and bright,
Leading the Day and outspeeding the
Night,
With the powers of a world of perfect
light.

Semichorus I

We whirl, singing loud, round the gather-
ing sphere,
Till the trees, and the beasts, and the
clouds appear
From its chaos made calm by love, not
fear.

Semichorus II

We encircle the ocean and mountains of
earth,
And the happy forms of its death and
birth

Change to the music of our sweet mirth.

Chorus of Hours and Spirits

Break the dance, and scatter the song,
Let some depart, and some remain,
Wherever we fly we lead along
In leashes, like starbeams, soft yet strong,
The clouds that are heavy with love's sweet rain.

Panthea. Ha! they are gone!
Ione. Yet feel you no delight
From the past sweetness?

Panthea. As the bare green hill
When some soft cloud vanishes into rain,
Laughs with a thousand drops of sunny water
To the unpavilioned sky!

Ione. Even whilst we speak
New notes arise. What is that awful sound?

Panthea. 'Tis the deep music of the rolling world
Kindling within the strings of the waved air,
Æolian modulations.

Ione. Listen too,
How every pause is filled with under notes,

Clear, silver, icy, keen, awakening tones,
Which pierce the sense, and live within the soul,
As the sharp stars pierce winter's crystal air

And gaze upon themselves within the sea.

Panthea. But see where through two openings in the forest

Which hanging branches overcanopy,
And where two runnels of a rivulet,
Between the close moss violet-inwoven,
Have made their path of melody, like sisters

Who part with sighs that they may meet in smiles,

Turning their dear disunion to an isle
Of lovely grief, a wood of sweet sad thoughts;

Two visions of strange radiance float upon

The ocean-like enchantment of strong sound,

Which flows intenser, keener, deeper yet
Under the ground and through the windless air.

Ione. I see a chariot like that thinnest boat,

In which the mother of the months is borne

By ebbing night into her western cave,
When she upsprings from interlunar dreams,

O'er which is curved an orblike canopy
Of gentle darkness, and the hills and woods

Distinctly seen through that dusk airy veil,

Regard like shapes in an enchanter's glass;

Its wheels are solid clouds, azure and gold,

Such as the genii of the thunderstorm
Pile on the floor of the illumined sea

When the sun rushes under it; they roll
And move and grow as with an inward wind;

Within it sits a wingéd infant, white
Its countenance, like the whiteness of bright snow,

Its plumes are as feathers of sunny frost,
Its limbs gleam white, through the wind flowing folds

Of its white robe, woof of ethereal pearl.
Its hair is white, the brightness of white light

Scattered in strings; yet its two eyes are heavens

Of liquid darkness, which the Deity
Within seems pouring, as a storm is poured

From jagged clouds, out of their arrowy lashes,

Tempering the cold and radiant air around,

With fire that is not brightness: in its hand

It sways a quivering moonbeam, from whose point

A guiding power directs the chariot's prow

Over its wheelèd clouds, which as they roll

Over the grass, and flowers, and waves, wake sounds,

Sweet as a singing rain of silver dew.

Panthea. And from the other opening in the wood

Rushes, with loud and whirlwind harmony,

A sphere, which is as many thousand spheres,

Solid as crystal, yet through all its mass
Flow, as through empty space, music and light:

Ten thousand orbs involving and involved,

Purple and azure, white, and green, and golden,

Sphere within sphere; and every space
 between
 Peopled with unimaginable shapes,
 Such as ghosts dream dwell in the lamp-
 less deep,
 Yet each inter-transpicuous, and they
 whirl
 Over each other with a thousand motions,
 Upon a thousand sightless axles spin-
 ning,
 And with the force of self-destroying
 swiftness,
 Intensely, slowly, solemnly roll on,
 Kindling with mingled sounds, and
 many tones,
 Intelligible words and music wild.
 With mighty whirl the multitudinous
 orb
 Grinds the bright brook into an azure
 mist
 Of elemental subtlety, like light:
 And the wild odor of the forest flowers,
 The music of the living grass and air,
 The emerald light of leaf-entangled
 beams
 Round its intense yet self-conflicting
 speed,
 Seem kneaded into one ærial mass
 Which drowns the sense. Within the
 orb itself,
 Pillowed upon its alabaster arms,
 Like to a child o'erwearied with sweet
 toil,
 On its own folded wings, and wavy hair,
 The Spirit of the Earth is laid asleep,
 And you can see its little lips are moving,
 Amid the changing light of their own
 smiles,
 Like one who talks of what he loves in
 dream.
Ione: 'T is only mocking the orb's
 harmony.
Panthea. And from a star upon its
 forehead, shoot,
 Like swords of azure fire, or golden
 spears
 With tyrant-quelling myrtle overtwin'd,
 Embleming heaven and earth united
 now,
 Vast beams like spokes of some invisible
 wheel
 Which whirl as the orb whirls, swifter
 than thought,
 Filling the abyss with sun-like lighten-
 ings,
 And perpendicular now, and now trans-
 verse,
 Pierce the dark soil, and as they pierce
 and pass,

Make bare the secrets of the earth's deep
 heart;
 Infinite mine of adamant and gold,
 Valueless stones, and unimagined gems,
 And caverns on crystalline columns
 poised
 With vegetable silver overspread;
 Wells of unfathomed fire, and water
 springs
 Whence the great sea, even as a child is
 fed,
 Whose vapors clothe earth's monarch
 mountain-tops
 With kingly ermine snow. The beams
 flash on
 And make appear the melancholy ruins
 Of cancelled cycles; anchors, beaks of
 ships;
 Planks turned to marble; quivers, helms,
 and spears,
 And gorgon-headed targes, and the
 wheels
 Of scythéd chariots and the emblazonry
 Of trophies, standards, and armorial
 beasts,
 Round which death laughed, sepulchred
 emblems
 Of dead destruction, ruin within ruin!
 The wrecks beside of many a city vast,
 Whose population which the earth grew
 over
 Was mortal, but not human; see, they
 lie,
 Their monstrous works, and uncouth
 skeletons,
 Their statues, homes and fanes; pro-
 digious shapes
 Huddled in gray annihilation, split,
 Jammed in the hard, black deep; and
 over these,
 The anatomies of unknown wingéd
 things,
 And fishes which were isles of living
 scale,
 And serpents, bony chains, twisted
 around
 The iron crags, or within heaps of dust
 To which the tortuous strength of their
 last pangs
 Had crushed the iron crags; and over
 these
 The jagged alligator, and the might
 Of earth-convulsing behemoth, which
 once
 Were monarch beasts, and on the slimy
 shores,
 And weed-overgrown continents of earth,
 Increased and multiplied like summer
 worms

On an abandoned corpse, till the blue
globe
Wrapt deluge round it like a cloak, and
they
Yelled, gasped, and were abolished ; or
some God
Whose throne was in a comet, passed,
and cried,
Be not ! And like my words they were
no more.

The Earth

The joy, the triumph, the delight, the
madness !
The boundless, overflowing, bursting
gladness,
The vaporous exultation not to be con-
fined !
Ha ! ha ! the animation of delight
Which wraps me, like an atmosphere
of light,
And bears me as a cloud is borne by its
own wind.

The Moon

Brother mine, calm wanderer,
Happy globe of land and air,
Some Spirit is darted like a beam from
thee,
Which penetrates my frozen frame,
And passes with the warmth of flame,
With love, and odor, and deep melody
Through me, through me !

The Earth

Ha ! ha ! the caverns of my hollow
mountains,
My cloven fire-crag, sound-exulting
fountains
Laugh with a vast and inextinguishable
laughter.
The oceans, and the deserts, and the
abysses,
And the deep air's unmeasured
wildernesses,
Answer from all their clouds and billows,
echoing after.

They cry aloud as I do. Sceptred
curse,
Who all our green and azure universe
Threatenedst to muffle round with black
destruction, sending
A solid cloud to rain hot thunder-
stones,
And splinter and knead down my
children's bones,
All I bring forth, to one void mass,
battering and blending.

Until each crag-like tower, and
storied column,
Palace, and obelisk, and temple
solemn,
My imperial mountains crowned with
cloud, and snow, and fire ;
My sea-like forests, every blade and
blossom
Which finds a grave or cradle in my
bosom,
Were stamped by thy strong hate into a
lifeless mire.

How art thou sunk, withdrawn,
covered, drunk up
By thirsty nothing, as the brackish
cup
Drained by a desert-troop, a little drop
for all ;
And from beneath, around, within,
above,
Filling thy void annihilation, love
Burst in like light on caves cloven by
the thunder-ball.

The Moon

The snow upon my lifeless mountains
Is loosened into living fountains,
My solid oceans flow, and sing, and
shine :
A spirit from my heart bursts forth,
It clothes with unexpected birth
My cold bare bosom : Oh ! it must be
thine
On mine, on mine !

Gazing on thee I feel, I know
Green stalks burst forth, and bright
flowers grow,
And living shapes upon my bosom
move :
Music is in the sea and air,
Winged clouds soar here and there,
Dark with the rain new buds are dream-
ing of :
'Tis love, all love !

The Earth

It interpenetrates my granite mass,
Through tangled roots and trodden
clay doth pass,
Into the utmost leaves and delicatest
flowers ;
Upon the winds, among the clouds 'tis
spread,
It wakes a life in the forgotten dead,
They breathe a spirit up from their
obscurest bowers,

And like a storm bursting its cloudy
prison

With thunder, and with whirlwind,
has arisen

Out of the lampless caves of unimagined
being :

With earthquake shock and swift-
ness making shiver

Thought's stagnant chaos, unremoved
for ever,

Till hate, and fear, and pain, light-van-
quished shadows, fleeing,

Leave Man, who was a many-sided
mirror,

Which could distort to many a shape
of error,

This true fair world of things, a sea re-
flecting love ;

Which over all his kind as the sun's
heaven

Gliding o'er ocean, smooth, serene, and
even

Darting from starry depths radiance and
life, doth move,

Leave Man, even as a leprous child
is left,

Who follows a sick beast to some
warm cleft

Of rocks, through which the might of
healing springs is poured ;

Then when it wanders home with
rosy smile,

Unconscious, and its mother fears
awhile

It is a spirit, then, weeps on her child
restored—

Man, oh, not men ! a chain of linkéd
thought,

Of love and might to be divided not,
Compelling the elements with adaman-
tine stress ;

As the sun rules, even with a tyrant's
The unquiet republic of the maze

Of planets, struggling fierce towards
heaven's free wilderness—

Man, one harmonious soul of many
a soul,

Whose nature is its own divine control,
Where all things flow to all, as rivers to
the sea ;

Familiar acts are beautiful through
Labor, and pain, and grief, in life's
green grove

Sport like tame beasts, none knew how
gentle they could be !

His will, with all mean passions, bad
delights,

And selfish cares, its trembling
satellites,

A spirit ill to guide, but mighty to obey,
Is as a tempest-wingéd ship, whose
helm

Love rules, through waves which
dare not overwhelm,

Forcing life's wildest shores to own its
sovereign sway.

All things confess his strength
Through the cold mass

Of marble and of color his dreams pass ;
Bright threads whence mothers weave
the robes their children wear ;

Language is a perpetual orphic song,
Which rules with Dædal harmony a
throng

Of thoughts and forms, which else
senseless and shapeless were.

The lightning is his slave ; heaven's
utmost deep

Gives up her stars, and like a flock of
sheep

They pass before his eye, are numbered,
and roll on !

The tempest is his steed, he strides
the air ;

And the abyss shouts from her depth
laid bare,

Heaven, hast thou secrets ? Man un-
veils me ; I have none.

The Moon

The shadow of white death has past
From my path in heaven at last,

A clinging shroud of solid frost and sleep ;
And through my newly-woven bowers,

Wander happy paramours,

Less mighty, but as mild as those who
keep

Thy vales more deep.

The Earth

As the dissolving warmth of dawn
may fold

A half unfrozen dew-globe, green and
gold,

And crystalline, till it becomes a wingéd
mist,

And wanders up the vault of the blue
day,

Outlives the noon, and on the sun's
last ray

Hangs o'er the sea, a fleece of fire and
amethyst,

The Moon

Thou art folded, thou art lying
 In the light which is undying
 Of thine own joy, and heaven's smile
 divine ;
 All suns and constellations shower
 On thee a light, a life, a power
 Which doth array thy sphere ; thou
 pourest thine
 On mine, on mine !

The Earth

I spin beneath my pyramid of night,
 Which points into the heavens dream-
 ing delight,
 Murmuring victorious joy in my en-
 chanted sleep ;
 As a youth lulled in love-dreams faint-
 ly sighing,
 Under the shadows of his beauty ly-
 ing,
 Which round his rest a watch of light
 and warmth doth keep.

The Moon

As in the soft and sweet eclipse,
 When soul meets soul on lovers' lips,
 High hearts are calm, and brightest eyes
 are dull ;
 So when thy shadow falls on me,
 Then am I mute and still, by thee
 Covered ; of thy love, Orb most beautiful,
 Full, oh, too full !

Thou art speeding round the sun
 Brightest world of many a one ;
 Green and azure sphere which shinest
 With a light which is divinest
 Among all the lamps of Heaven
 To whom life and light is given ;
 I, thy crystal paramour,
 Borne beside thee by a power
 Like the polar Paradise,
 Magnet-like of lovers' eyes ;
 I, a most enamored maiden
 Whose weak brain is overlaid
 With the pleasure of her love,
 Maniac-like around thee move
 Gazing, an insatiate bride,
 On thy form from every side
 Like a Mænad, round the cup
 Which Agave lifted up
 In the weird Cadmæan forest.
 Brother, wheresoe'er thou soarest
 I must hurry, whirl and follow
 Through the heavens wide and hollow,
 Sheltered by the warm embrace
 Of thy soul from hungry space,

Drinking from thy sense and sight
 Beauty, majesty, and might,
 As a lover or chameleon
 Grows like what it looks upon
 As a violet's gentle eye
 Gazes on the azure sky
 Until its hue grows like what it beholds,
 As a gray and watery mist
 Glows like solid amethyst
 Athwart the western mountain it en-
 folds,
 When the sunset sleeps
 Upon its snow.

The Earth

And the weak day weeps
 That it should be so.
 Oh, gentle Moon, the voice of thy de-
 light
 Falls on me like thy clear and tender
 light
 Soothing the seaman, borne the summer
 night,
 Through isles for ever calm :
 Oh, gentle Moon, thy crystal accents
 pierce
 The caverns of my pride's deep universe,
 Charming the tiger joy, whose tramp-
 lings fierce
 Made wounds which need thy balm.
Panthea. I rise as from a bath of
 sparkling water,
 A bath of azure light, among dark rocks,
 Out of the stream of sound.
Ione. Ah me ! sweet sister,
 The stream of sound has ebbed away
 from us,
 And you pretend to rise out of its wave,
 Because your words fall like the clear,
 soft dew
 Shaken from a bathing wood-nymph's
 limbs and hair.
Panthea. Peace ! peace ! A mighty
 Power, which is as darkness,
 Is rising out of Earth, and from the sky
 Is showered like night, and from within
 the air
 Bursts, like eclipse which had been
 gathered up
 Into the pores of sunlight : the bright
 visions,
 Wherein the singing spirits rode and
 shone,
 Gleam like pale meteors through a
 watery night.
Ione. There is a sense of words upon
 mine ear.
Panthea. An universal sound like
 words : Oh, list !

Demogorgon

Thou, Earth, calm empire of a happy
soul,
Sphere of divinest shapes and har-
monies,
Beautiful orb! gathering as thou dost
roll
The love which paves thy path along
the skies:

The Earth

I hear: I am as a drop of dew that
dies.

Demogorgon

Thou, Moon, which gazest on the nightly
Earth
With wonder, as it gazes upon thee;
Whilst each to men, and beasts, and the
swift birth
Of birds, is beauty, love, calm, har-
mony:

The Moon

I hear: I am a leaf shaken by thee!

Demogorgon

Ye kings of suns and stars, Demons and
Gods,
Ethereal Dominations, who possess
Elysian, windless, fortunate abodes
Beyond Heaven's constellated wilder-
ness:

A Voice from above

Our great Republic hears, we are
blest, and bless.

Demogorgon

Ye happy dead, whom beams of brightest
verse
Are clouds to hide, not colors to
portray,
Whether your nature is that universe
Which once ye saw and suffered—

A Voice from beneath

Or as they
Whom we have left, we change and
pass away.

Demogorgon

Ye elemental Genii, who have homes
From man's high mind even to the
central stone
Of sullen lead; from Heaven's star-
fretted domes

To the dull weed some sea-worm
battens on:

A confused Voice

We hear: thy words waken Oblivion.

Demogorgon

Spirits, whose homes are flesh: ye beasts
and birds,
Ye worms, and fish; ye living leaves
and buds;
Lightning and wind; and ye untame-
able herds,
Meteors and mists, which throng air's
solitudes:—

A Voice

Thy voice to us is wind among still
woods.

Demogorgon

Man, who wert once a despot and a slave;
A dupe and a deceiver; a decay;
A traveller from the cradle to the grave
Through the dim night of this im-
mortal day:

All

Speak: thy strong words may never
pass away.

Demogorgon

This is the day, which down the void
abysm
At the Earth-born's spell yawns for
Heaven's despotism,
And Conquest is dragged captive
through the deep:
Love, from its awful throne of patient
power
In the wise heart, from the last giddy
hour
Of dead endurance, from the slippery,
steep,
And narrow verge of crag-like agony,
springs
And folds over the world its healing
wings.

Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and En-
durance,
These are the seals of that most firm
assurance
Which bars the pit over Destruction's
strength;
And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
Mother of many acts and hours, should
free

The serpent that would clasp her with
 his length;
 These are the spells by which to reas-
 sume
 An empire o'er the disentangled doom.
 To suffer woes which Hope thinks in-
 finite;
 To forgive wrongs darker than death or
 night;
 To defy Power, which seems omni-
 potent;
 To love, and bear; to hope till Hope
 creates
 From its own wreck the thing it con-
 templates;
 Neither to change, nor falter, nor re-
 pent;
 This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
 Good, great and joyous, beautiful and
 free;
 This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and
 Victory.¹ *Sept. 1818-1819. 1820.*

¹ The prominent feature of Shelley's theory of the destiny of the human species was that evil is not inherent in the system of the creation, but an accident that might be expelled. This also forms a portion of Christianity: God made earth and man perfect, till he, by his fall,

"Brought death into the world and all our woe."

Shelley believed that mankind had only to will that there should be no evil, and there would be none. It is not my part in these Notes to notice the arguments that have been urged against this opinion, but to mention the fact that he entertained it, and was indeed attached to it with fervent enthusiasm. That man could be so perfectionized as to be able to expel evil from his own nature, and from the greater part of the creation, was the cardinal point of his system. And the subject he loved best to dwell on was the image of One warring with the Evil Principle, oppressed not only by it, but by all—even the good, who were deluded into considering evil a necessary portion of humanity; a victim full of fortitude and hope and the spirit of triumph, emanating from a reliance in the ultimate omnipotence of Good. Such he had depicted in his last poem, when he made Laon the enemy and the victim of tyrants. He now took a more idealised image of the same subject. He followed certain classical authorities in figuring Saturn as the good principle, Jupiter the usurping evil one, and Prometheus as the regenerator, who, unable to bring mankind back to primitive innocence, used knowledge as a weapon to defeat evil, by leading mankind, beyond the state wherein they are sinless through ignorance, to that in which they are virtuous through wisdom. Jupiter punished the temerity of the Titan by chaining him to a rock of Caucasus, and causing a vulture to devour his still-renewed heart. There was a prophecy afloat in heaven portending the fall of Jove, the secret of averting which was known only to Prometheus; and the god offered freedom from torture on condition of its being communicated to him. According to the

THE SENSITIVE PLANT

PART FIRST

A SENSITIVE Plant in a garden grew,
 And the young winds fed it with silver
 dew,
 And it opened its fan-like leaves to the
 light,
 And closed them beneath the kisses of
 night.

And the Spring arose on the garden fair,

mythological story, this referred to the offspring of Thetis, who was destined to be greater than his father. Prometheus at last bought pardon for his crime of enriching mankind with his gifts, by revealing the prophecy. Hercules killed the vulture, and set him free; and Thetis was married to Peleus, the father of Achilles.

Shelley adapted the catastrophe of this story to his peculiar views. The son greater than his father, born of the nuptials of Jupiter and Thetis, was to dethrone Evil, and bring back a happier reign than that of Saturn. Prometheus defies the power of his enemy, and endures centuries of torture; till the hour arrives when Jove, blind to the real event, but darkly guessing that some great good to himself will flow, espouses Thetis. At the moment, the Primal Power of the world drives him from his usurped throne, and Strength, in the person of Hercules, liberates Humanity, typified in Prometheus, from the tortures generated by evil done or suffered. Asia, one of the Oceanides, is the wife of Prometheus—she was, according to other mythological interpretations, the same as Venus and Nature. When the benefactor of mankind is liberated, Nature resumes the beauty of her prime, and is united to her husband, the emblem of the human race, in perfect and happy union. In the fourth Act, the Poet gives further scope to his imagination, and idealizes the forms of creation—such as we know them, instead of such as they appeared to the Greeks. Maternal Earth, the mighty parent, is superseded by the Spirit of the Earth, the guide of our planet through the realms of sky; while his fair and weaker companion and attendant, the Spirit of the Moon, receives bliss from the annihilation of Evil in the superior sphere.

Shelley develops more particularly in the lyrics of this drama his abstruse and imaginative theories with regard to the creation. It requires a mind as subtle and penetrating as his own to understand the mystic meanings scattered throughout the poem. They elude the ordinary reader by their abstraction and delicacy of distinction, but they are far from vague. It was his design to write prose metaphysical essays on the nature of Man, which would have served to explain much of what is obscure in his poetry; a few scattered fragments of observations and remarks alone remain. He considered these philosophical views of Mind and Nature to be instinct with the intensest spirit of poetry.

More popular poets clothe the ideal with familiar and sensible imagery. Shelley loved to idealize the real—to gift the mechanism of the material universe with a soul and a voice, and to bestow such also on the most delicate and abstract emotions and thoughts of the mind. Sophocles was his great master in this species of imagery.—(From Mrs. Shelley's note.)

Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere ;
And each flower and herb on Earth's
dark breast
Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

But none ever trembled and panted with
bliss
In the garden, the field, or the wilder-
ness,
Like a doe in the noontide with love's
sweet want,
As the companionless Sensitive Plant.

The snowdrop and then the violet,
Arose from the ground with warm rain
wet,
And their breath was mixed with fresh
odor, sent
From the turf, like the voice and the
instrument.

Then the pied wind-flowers and the
tulip tall,
And narcissi, the fairest among them all,
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's
recess,
Till they die of their own dear loveliness ;

And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,
Whom youth makes so fair and passion
so pale,
That the light of its tremulous bells is
seen
Through their pavilions of tender green ;

And the hyacinth purple, and white,
and blue,
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal
anew
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
It was felt like an odor within the
sense ;

And the rose like a nymph to the bath
address,
Which unveiled the depth of her glow-
ing breast,
Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air
The soul of her beauty and love lay
bare :

And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,
As a Mænad, its moonlight-colored cup,
Till the fiery star, which is its eye,
Gazed through clear dew on the tender
sky ;

And the jessamine faint, and the sweet
tuberose,

The sweetest flower for scent that blows ;
And all rare blossoms from every clime
Grew in that garden in perfect prime.

And on the stream whose inconstant
bosom
Was pranked under boughs of embower-
ing blossom,
With golden and green light, slanting
through
Their heaven of many a tangled hue,

Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,
And starry river-buds glimmered by,
And around them the soft stream did
glide and dance
With a motion of sweet sound and
radiance.

And the sinuous paths of lawn and of
moss,
Which led through the garden, along
and across,
Some open at once to the sun and the
breeze,
Some lost among bowers of blossoming
trees,

Were all paved with daisies and delicate
bells
As fair as the fabulous asphodels,
And flowrets which drooping as day
drooped too
Fell into pavilions, white, purple, and
blue,
To roof the glow-worm from the evening
dew.

And from this undefiled Paradise
The flowers (as an infant's awakening
eyes
Smile on its mother, whose singing
sweet
Can first lull, and at last must awaken
it),

When Heaven's blithe winds had un-
folded them,
As mine-lamps enkindle a hidden gem,
Shone smiling to Heaven, and every one
Shared joy in the light of the gentle sun ;

For each one was interpenetrated
With the light and the odor its neigh-
bor shed,
Like young lovers whom youth and love
make dear
Wrapped and filled by their mutual
atmosphere.

But the Sensitive Plant which could
give small fruit
Of the love which it felt from the leaf
to the root,
Received more than all, it loved more
than ever,
Where none wanted but it, could belong
to the giver,

For the Sensitive Plant has no bright
flower ;
Radiance and odor are not its dower ;
It loves, even like Love, its deep heart
is full,
It desires what it has not, the beautiful !

The light winds which from unsustain-
ing wings,
Shed the music of many murmurings ;
The beams which dart from many a
star
Of the flowers whose hues they bear
afar ;

The pluméd insects swift and free,
Like golden boats on a sunny sea,
Laden with light and odor, which pass
Over the gleam of the living grass ;

The unseen clouds of the dew, which lie
Like fire in the flowers till the sun rides
high,
Then wander like spirits among the
spheres,
Each cloud faint with the fragrance it
bears ;

The quivering vapors of dim noontide,
Which like a sea o'er the warm earth
glide,
In which every sound, and odor, and
beam,
Move, as reeds in a single stream ;

Each and all like ministering angels
were
For the Sensitive Plant sweet joy to
bear,
Whilst the lagging hours of the day
went by
Like windless clouds o'er a tender sky.

And when evening descended from
heaven above,
And the Earth was all rest, and the air
was all love,
And delight, tho' less bright, was far
more deep,
And the day's veil fell from the world
of sleep,

And the beasts, and the birds, and the
insects were drowned
In an ocean of dreams without a sound ;
Whose waves never mark, tho' they
ever impress
The light sand which paves it, conscious-
ness ;

(Only overhead the sweet nightingale
Ever sang more sweet as the day might
fail,
And snatches of its Elysian chant
Were mixed with the dreams of the
Sensitive Plant.)

The Sensitive Plant was the earliest
Up-gathered into the bosom of rest ;
A sweet child weary of its delight,
The feeblest and yet the favorite,
Cradled within the embrace of night.

PART SECOND

There was a Power in this sweet place,
An Eve in this Eden ; a ruling grace
Which to the flowers did they waken or
dream,
Was as God is to the starry scheme.

A Lady, the wonder of her kind,
Whose form was upborne by a lovely
mind
Which, dilating, had moulded her mien
and motion
Like a sea-flower unfolded beneath the
ocean,

Tended the garden from morn to even :
And the meteors of that sublunar heaven,
Like the lamps of the air when night
walks forth,
Laughed round her footsteps up from
the Earth !

She had no companion of mortal race,
But her tremulous breath and her flush-
ing face
Told, whilst the morn kissed the sleep
from her eyes
That her dreams were less slumber than
Paradise :

As if some bright Spirit for her sweet
sake
Had deserted heaven while the stars
were awake,
As if yet around her he lingering were,
Tho' the veil of daylight concealed him
from her.

Her step seemed to pity the grass it
pressed ;
You might hear by the heaving of her
breast,
That the coming and going of the wind
Brought pleasure there and left passion
behind.

And wherever her airy footstep trod,
Her trailing hair from the grassy sod
Erased its light vestige, with shadowy
sweep,
Like a sunny storm o'er the dark green
deep.

I doubt not the flowers of that garden
sweet
Rejoiced in the sound of her gentle feet ;
I doubt not they felt the spirit that came
From her glowing fingers thro' all their
frame.

She sprinkled bright water from the
stream
On those that were faint with the sunny
beam ;
And out of the cups of the heavy flowers
She emptied the rain of the thunder
showers.

She lifted their heads with her tender
hands,
And sustained them with rods and osier
bands ;
If the flowers had been her own infants
she
Could never have nursed them more
tenderly.

And all killing insects and gnawing
worms,
And things of obscene and unlovely
forms,
She bore in a basket of Indian woof,
Into the rough woods far aloof,

In a basket, of grasses and wild-flowers
full,
The freshest her gentle hands could pull
For the poor banished insects, whose
intent,
Although they did ill, was innocent.

But the bee and the beamlike ephemeris
Whose path is the lightning's, and soft
moths that kiss
The sweet lips of the flowers, and harm
not, did she
Make her attendant angels be.

And many an antenatal tomb,
Where butterflies dream of the life to
come,
She left clinging round the smooth and
dark
Edge of the odorous cedar bark.

This fairest creature from earliest spring
Thus moved through the garden minis-
tering
All the sweet season of summer tide,
And ere the first leaf looked brown—she
died !

PART THIRD

Three days the flowers of the garden fair,
Like stars when the moon is awakened,
were,
Or the waves of Baïæ, ere luminous
She floats up through the smoke of
Vesuvius.

And on the fourth, the Sensitive Plant
Felt the sound of the funeral chant,
And the steps of the bearers, heavy and
slow,
And the sobs of the mourners deep and
low ;

The weary sound and the heavy breath,
And the silent motions of passing death,
And the smell, cold, oppressive, and
dank,
Sent through the pores of the coffin
plank ;

The dark grass, and the flowers among
the grass,
Were bright with tears as the crowd did
pass ;
From their sighs the wind caught a
mournful tone,
And sate in the pines, and gave groan
for groan.

The garden once fair, became cold and
foul,
Like the corpse of her who had been its
soul,
Which at first was lovely as if in sleep,
Then slowly changed, till it grew a heap
To make men tremble who never weep.

Swift summer into the autumn flowed,
And frost in the mist of the morning
rode,
Though the noonday sun looked clear
and bright,
Mocking the spoil of the secret night.

The rose leaves, like flakes of crimson
snow,
Paved the turf and the moss below.
The lilies were drooping, and white, and
wan,
Like the head and the skin of a dying
man.

And Indian plants, of scent and hue
The sweetest that ever were fed on dew,
Leaf by leaf, day after day,
Were massed into the common clay.

And the leaves, brown, yellow, and gray,
and red,
And white with the whiteness of what
is dead,
Like troops of ghosts on the dry wind
past;
Their whistling noise made the birds
aghrast.

And the gusty winds waked the wingéd
seeds,
Out of their birthplace of ugly weeds,
Till they clung round many a sweet
flower's stem,
Which rotted into the earth with them.

The water-blooms under the rivulet
Fell from the stalks on which they were
set;
And the eddies drove them here and
there,
As the winds did those of the upper air.

Then the rain came down, and the
broken stalks,
Were bent and tangled across the walks;
And the leafless network of parasite
bowers
Massed into ruin; and all sweet flowers.

Between the time of the wind and the
snow,
All loathliest weeds began to grow,
Whose coarse leaves were splashed with
many a speck,
Like the water-snake's belly and the
toad's back.

And thistles, and nettles, and darnels
rank,
And the dock, and henbane, and hem-
lock dank,
Stretched out its long and hollow shank,
And stifled the air till the dead wind
stank.

And plants, at whose names the verse
feels loath,

Filled the place with a monstrous under
growth,
Prickly, and pulpos, and blistering, and
blue,
Livid, and starred with a lurid dew.

And agarics, and fungi, with mildew
and mould
Started like mist from the wet ground
cold;
Pale, fleshy, as if the decaying dead
With a spirit of growth had been
animated!

Spawn, weeds, and filth, a leprous scum,
Made the running rivulet thick and
dumb
And at its outlet flags huge as stakes
Dammed it up with roots knotted like
water snakes.

And hour by hour, when the air was
still,
The vapors arose which have strength
to kill:
At morn they were seen, at noon they
were felt,
At night they were darkness no star
could melt.

And unctuous meteors from spray to
spray
Crept and flitted in broad noontide
Unseen; every branch on which they
alight
By a venomous blight was burned and
bit.

The Sensitive Plant like one forbid
Wept, and the tears within each lid
Of its folded leaves which together grew
Were changed to a blight of frozen
glue.

For the leaves soon fell, and the branches
soon
By the heavy axe of the blast were
hewn;
The sap shrank to the root through
every pore
As blood to a heart that will beat no
more.

For Winter came: the wind was his
whip:
One choppy finger was on his lip:
He had torn the cataracts from the hills
And they clanked at his girdle like
manacles;

His breath was a chain which without
a sound
The earth, and the air, and the water
bound ;

He came, fiercely driven, in his chariot-
throne
By the tenfold blasts of the arctic zone.

Then the weeds which were forms of
living death
Fled from the frost to the earth beneath.
Their decay and sudden flight from frost
Was but like the vanishing of a ghost !

And under the roots of the Sensitive
Plant
The moles and the dormice died for
want :
The birds dropped stiff from the frozen
air
And were caught in the branches naked
and bare.

First there came down a thawing rain
And its dull drops froze on the boughs
again,
Then there steamed up a freezing dew
Which to the drops of the thaw-rain
grew ;

And a northern whirlwind, wandering
about
Like a wolf that had smelt a dead child
out,
Shook the boughs thus laden, and heavy
and stiff,
And snapped them off with his rigid
griff.

When winter had gone and spring came
back
The Sensitive Plant was a leafless wreck ;
But the mandrakes, and toadstools, and
docks, and darnels,
Rose like the dead from their ruined
charnels.

CONCLUSION

Whether the Sensitive Plant, or that
Which within its boughs like a spirit
sat
Ere its outward form had known decay,
Now felt this change, I cannot say.

Whether that lady's gentle mind,
No longer with the form combined
Which scattered love, as stars do light,
Found sadness, where it left delight,

I dare not guess ; but in this life
Of error, ignorance, and strife,
Where nothing is, but all things seem,
And we the shadows of the dream,

It is a modest creed, and yet
Pleasant if one considers it,
To own that death itself must be,
Like all the rest, a mockery.

That garden sweet, that lady fair,
And all sweet shapes and odors there,
In truth have never passed away :
'Tis we, 'tis ours, are changed ; not they.
1820. 1820.



THE CLOUD

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting
flowers,
From the seas and the streams ;
I bear light shade for the leaves when
laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews
that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's
breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast ;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the
blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skiey
bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits,
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits ;
Over earth and ocean, with gentle
motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea ;
Over the rills, and the craggs, and the
hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or
stream,
The Spirit he loves remains ;
And I all the while bask in heaven's
blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor
eyes,

And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead,

As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and
swings,

An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.

And when sunset may breathe, from the
lit sea beneath,

Its ardors of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall

From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy
nest,

As still as a brooding dove.

That orb'd maiden with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the moon,

Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like
floor,

By the midnight breezes strewn ;
And wherever the beat of her unseen
feet,

Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's
thin roof,

The stars peep behind her and peer ;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,

Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built
tent,

Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me
on high,

Are each paved with the moon and
these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning
zone,

And the moon's with a girdle of
pearl ;

The volcanoes are dim, and the stars
reel and swim,

When the whirlwinds my banner
unfurl.

From cape to cape, with a bridge-like
shape,

Over a torrent sea,

Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,

The mountains its columns be.

The triumphal arch through which I
march

With hurricane, fire, and snow,

When the powers of the air are chained
to my chair,

Is the million-colored bow ;

The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,
While the moist earth was laughing
below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky ;

I pass through the pores of the ocean
and shores ;

I change, but I cannot die.

For after the rain when with never a
stain,

The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their
convex gleams,

Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,

And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a
ghost from the tomb,

I arise and unbuild it again.

1820. 1820.

TO A SKYLARK

HAIL to thee, blithe spirit !

Bird thou never wert,

That from heaven, or near it,

Pourest thy full heart

In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher

From the earth thou springest

Like a cloud of fire ;

The blue deep thou wingest,

And singing still dost soar, and soaring
ever singest.

In the golden lightning

Of the sunken sun,

O'er which clouds are brightning,

Thou dost float and run ;

Like an unbodied joy whose race is just
begun.

The pale purple even

Melts around thy flight ;

Like a star of heaven,

In the broad daylight

Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy
shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows

Of that silver sphere,

Whose intense lamp narrows

In the white dawn clear,

Until we hardly see, we feel that it is
there.

All the earth and air

With thy voice is loud,

As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and
heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not ;
What is most like thee ?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of
melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it
heeded not :

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace-tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which over-
flows her bower :

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which
screen it from the view :

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these
heavy-winged thieves :

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music
doth surpass :

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so
divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some
hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain ?
What fields, or waves, or mountains ?
What shapes of sky or plain ?
What love of thine own kind ? what ig-
norance of pain ?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be :
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee :
Thou lovest ; but ne'er knew love's sad
satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a
crystal stream ?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not :
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught ;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of
saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear ;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should
come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of
the ground !

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am
listening now. 1820. 1820.

TO——

I FEAR thy kisses, gentle maiden,
Thou needest not fear mine ;
My spirit is too deeply laden
Ever to burthen thine.

I fear thy mien, thy tones, thy motion,
Thou needest not fear mine ;
Innocent is the heart's devotion
With which I worship thine.

1820. 1824.

ARETHUSA

ARETHUSA arose
 From her couch of snows
 In the Acroceranuan mountains,—
 From cloud and from crag,
 With many a jag,
 Shepherding her bright fountains.
 She leapt down the rocks,
 With her rainbow locks
 Streaming among the streams;—
 Her steps paved with green
 The downward ravine
 Which slopes to the western gleams :
 And gliding and springing
 She went, ever singing,
 In murmurs as soft as sleep ;
 The Earth seemed to love her,
 And Heaven smiled above her,
 As she lingered towards the deep.

Then Alpheus bold,
 On his glacier cold,
 With his trident the mountains strook
 And opened a chasm
 In the rocks ;—with the spasm
 All Erymanthus shook,
 And the black south wind
 It concealed behind
 The urns of the silent snow,
 And earthquake and thunder
 Did rend in sunder
 The bars of the springs below.
 The beard and the hair
 Of the River-god were
 Seen through the torrent's sweep,
 As he followed the light
 Of the fleet nymph's flight
 To the brink of the Dorian deep.

“ Oh, save me ! Oh, guide me !
 And bid the deep hide me,
 For he grasps me now by the hair ! ”
 The loud Ocean heard,
 To its blue depth stirred,
 And divided at her prayer ;
 And under the water
 The Earth's white daughter
 Flew like a sunny beam ;
 Behind her descended
 Her billows, unblended
 With the brackish Dorian stream :—
 Like a gloomy stain
 On the emerald main
 Alpheus rushed behind,—
 As an eagle pursuing
 A dove to its ruin
 Down the streams of the cloudy wind.

Under the bowers
 Where the Ocean Powers
 Sit on their pearly thrones,
 Through the coral woods
 Of the weltering floods,
 Over heaps of unvalued stones ;
 Through the dim beams
 Which amid the streams
 Weave a network of colored light ;
 And under the caves,
 Where the shadowy waves
 Are as green as the forest's night ;—
 Outspeeding the shark,
 And the sword-fish dark,
 Under the ocean foam,
 And up through the rifts
 Of the mountain cliffs
 They passed to their Dorian home.

And now from their fountains
 In Enna's mountains,
 Down one vale where the morning basks,
 Like friends once parted
 Grown single-hearted,
 They ply their watery tasks.
 At sunrise they leap
 From their cradles steep
 In the cave of the shelving hill ;
 At noontide they flow
 Through the woods below
 And the meadows of Asphodel ;
 And at night they sleep
 In the rocking deep
 Beneath the Ortygian shore ;
 Like spirits that lie
 In the azure sky
 When they love but live no more.

1820. 1824.

HYMN OF PAN

FROM the forests and highlands
 We come, we come ;
 From the river-girt islands,
 Where loud waves are dumb
 Listening to my sweet pipings.
 The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
 The bees on the bells of thyme,
 The birds on the myrtle bushes,
 The cicale above in the lime,
 And the lizards below in the grass,
 Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
 Listening to my sweet pipings.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,
 And all dark Tempe lay
 In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing
 The light of the dying day,
 Speeded by my sweet pipings.

I sang of the dancing stars,
 I sang of the ædæal Earth,
 And of Heaven—and the giant wars,
 And Love, and Death, and Birth,—
 And then I changed my pip-
 ings,—
 Singing how down the vale of Menalus
 I pursued a maiden and clasp'd a reed :
 Gods and men, we are all deluded thus !
 It breaks in our bosom and then we
 bleed :
 All wept, as I think both ye now would,
 If envy or age had not frozen your blood,
 At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.

1820. 1824.

THE QUESTION

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearly Arcturi of the
earth,
The constellated flower that never sets ;
Faint ox lips ; tender bluebells, at
whose birth
The sod scarce heaved ; and that tall
flower that wets—
Like a child, half in tenderness and
mirth—
Its mother's face with heaven's collected
tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice,
it hears.
And in the warm hedge grew lush
eglantine,

And nearer to the river's trembling edge,
There grew broad flag-flowers, purple
prankt with white,
And starry river buds among the sedge,
And floating water-lilies, broad and
bright,
Which lit the oak that overhung the
hedge
With moonlight beams of their own
watery light ;
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep
green
As soothed the dazzled eye with sober
sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
 I made a nosegay, bound in such a
 way
 That the same hues, which in their
 natural bowers
 Were mingled or opposed, the like
 array
 Kept these imprisoned children of the
 Hours
 Within my hand,—and then, elate
 and gay,
 I hastened to the spot whence I had
 come,
 That I might there present it!—oh! to
 whom?
 1830. 1822.

SONG

RARELY, rarely, comest thou,
Spirit of Delight!
Wherefore hast thou left me now
Many a day and night?
Many a weary night and day
'Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me
Win thee back again?
With the joyous and the free
Thou wilt scoff at pain.
Spirit false! thou hast forgot
All but those who need thee not.

As a lizard with the shade
Of a trembling leaf,
Thou with sorrow art dismayed ;
Even the sighs of grief
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,
And reproach thou wilt not hear.

Let me set my mournful ditty
To a merry measure,
Thou wilt never come for pity,
Thou wilt come for pleasure,
Pity then will cut away
Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

I love all that thou lovest,
Spirit of Delight !
The fresh Earth in new leaves drest,
And the starry night ;
Autumn evening, and the morn
When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms
Of the radiant frost ;
I love waves, and winds, and storms, .
Every thing almost
Which is Nature's, and may be
Untainted by man's misery.

I love tranquil solitude,
And such society
As is quiet, wise, and good ;
Between thee and me
What difference ? but thou dost possess
The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love—though he has wings,
And like light can flee,
But above all other things,
Spirit, I love thee—
Thou art love and life ! Oh come,
Make once more my heart thy home.
1820.¹ 1824.

TO THE MOON

ART thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven and gazing on the
earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different
birth,—
And ever changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?
1820. 1824.

¹ Though included by Mrs. Shelley, and by later editors, among the poems of 1821, there is a copy of this poem in the Harvard College Manuscripts, dated in Shelley's handwriting, "Pisa, May, 1820." See note in Edward Dowden's Edition of Shelley.

THE WORLD'S WANDERERS

TELL me, thou star, whose wings of light
Speed thee in thy fiery flight,
In what cavern of the night
Will thy pinions close now ?

Tell me, moon, thou pale and gray
Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way,
In what depth of night or day
Seekest thou repose now ?

Weary wind, who wanderest
Like the world's rejected guest,
Hast thou still some secret nest
On the tree or billow ?

1820. 1824.

TIME LONG PAST

LIKE the ghost of a dear friend dead
Is Time long past.
A tone which is now forever fled,
A hope which is now forever past,
A love so sweet it could not last,
Was Time long past.

There were sweet dreams in the night
Of Time long past :
And, was it sadness or delight,
Each day a shadow onward cast
Which made us wish it yet might last—
That Time long past.

There is regret, almost remorse,
For Time long past.
'Tis like a child's beloved corse
A father watches, till at last
Beauty is like remembrance, cast
From Time long past.
1820. 1870.

EPIPSYCHIDION

VERSES ADDRESSED TO THE NOBLE AND
UNFORTUNATE LADY, EMILIA V——,
NOW IMPRISONED IN THE CONVENT
OF ———

L'anima amante si slancia fuori del creato, e
si crea nel infinito un Mondo tutto per essa,
diverso assai da questo oscuro e pauroso baratro.
HER OWN WORDS.

SWEET Spirit ! Sister of that orphan
one,
Whose empire is the name thou weepest
on,
In my heart's temple I suspend to thee
These votive wreaths of withered
memory.

Poor captive bird! who, from thy
 narrow cage,
 Pourest such music, that it might as-
 suage
 The rugged hearts of those who prisoned
 thee,
 Were they not deaf to all sweet melody;
 This song shall be thy rose: its petals
 pale
 Are dead, indeed, my adored Nightin-
 gale!
 But soft and fragrant is the faded
 blossom,
 And it has no thorn left to wound thy
 bosom.

High, spirit-wingéd Heart! who dost
 for ever
 Beat thine unfeeling bars with vain en-
 deavor,
 Till those bright plumes of thought, in
 which arrayed
 It over-soared this low and worldly
 shade,
 Lies shattered; and thy panting, wounded
 breast
 Stains with dear blood its unmaternal
 nest!
 I weep vain tears: blood would less
 bitter be,
 Yet poured forth gladlier, could it profit
 thee.

Seraph of Heaven! too gentle to be
 human,
 Veiling beneath that radiant form of
 Woman
 All that is insupportable in thee
 Of light, and love, and immortality!
 Sweet Benediction in the eternal Curse!
 Veiled Glory of this lampless Universe!
 Thou Moon beyond the clouds! Thou
 living Form
 Among the Dead! Thou Star above the
 Storm!
 Thou Wonder, and thou Beauty, and
 thou Terror!
 Thou Harmony of Nature's art! Thou
 Mirror
 In whom, as in the splendor of the Sun,
 All shapes look glorious which thou
 gazest on!
 Ay, even the dim words which obscure
 thee now
 Flash, lightning-like, with unaccus-
 tomed glow;
 I pray thee that thou blot from this sad
 song
 All of its much mortality and wrong,

With those clear drops, which start like
 sacred dew
 From the twin lights thy sweet soul
 darkens through,
 Weeping, till sorrow becomes ecstasy:
 Then smile on it, so that it may not die.

I never thought before my death to
 see
 Youth's vision thus made perfect.
 Emily,
 I love thee; though the world by no
 thin name
 Will hide that love, from its unvalued
 shame.
 Would we two had been twins of the same
 mother!
 Or, that the name my heart lent to
 another
 Could be a sister's bond for her and
 thee,
 Blending two beams of one eternity!
 Yet were one lawful and the other true,
 These names, though dear, could paint
 not, as is due,
 How beyond refuge I am thine. Ah me!
 I am not thine: I am a part of *thee*.

Sweet Lamp! my moth-like Muse has
 burnt its wings;
 Or, like a dying swan who soars and
 sings,
 Young Love should teach Time, in his
 own gray style,
 All that thou art. Art thou not void of
 guile,
 A lovely soul formed to be blest and
 bless?
 A well of sealed and secret happiness,
 Whose waters like blithe light and
 music are,
 Vanquishing dissonance and gloom? A
 Star
 Which moves not in the moving
 Heavens, alone?
 A smile amid dark frowns? a gentle
 tone
 Amid rude voices? a beloved light?
 A Solitude, a Refuge, a Delight?
 A Lute which those whom Love has
 taught to play
 Make music on, to soothe the roughest
 day
 And lull fond grief asleep? a buried
 treasure?
 A cradle of young thoughts of wingless
 pleasure;
 A violet-shrouded grave of Woe?—I
 measure

The world of fancies, seeking one like thee,
And find—alas! mine own infirmity.

She met me, Stranger, upon life's rough way,
And lured me towards sweet Death; as Night by Day,
Winter by Spring, or Sorrow by swift Hope,
Led into light, life, peace. An antelope,
In the suspended impulse of its lightness,
Were less ethereally light: the brightness
Of her divinest presence trembles through
Her limbs, as underneath a cloud of dew
Embodied in the windless Heaven of June
Amid the splendor-wingéd stars, the Moon
Burns, inextinguishably beautiful:
And from her lips, as from a hyacinth full
Of honey-dew, a liquid murmur drops,
Killing the sense with passion; sweet as stops
Of planetary music heard in trance.
In her mild lights the starry spirits dance,
The sunbeams of those wells which ever leap
Under the lightnings of the soul—too deep
For the brief fathom-line of thought or sense.
The glory of her being, issuing thence,
Stains the dead, blank, cold air with a warm shade
Of unentangled intermixture, made
By Love, of light and motion: one intense
Diffusion, one serene Omnipresence,
Whose flowing outlines mingle in their flowing
Around her cheeks and utmost fingers glowing
With the unintermitted blood, which there
Quivers (as in a fleece of snow-like air
The crimson pulse of living morning quiver),
Continuously prolonged, and ending never,
Till they are lost, and in that Beauty furléd
Which penetrates and clasps and fills the world;

Scarce visible from extreme loveliness.
Warm fragrance seems to fall from her light dress
And her loose hair; and where some heavy tress
The air of her own speed has disentwined,
The sweetness seems to satiate the faint wind;
And in the soul a wild odor is felt,
Beyond the sense, like fiery dews that melt
Into the bosom of a frozen bud.—
See where she stands! a mortal shape induéd
With love and life and light and deity,
And motion which may change but cannot die;
An image of some bright Eternity;
A shadow of some golden dream; a Splendor
Leaving the third sphere pilotless; a tender
Reflection of the eternal Moon of Love
Under whose motions life's dull billows move;
A Metaphor of Spring and Youth and Morning;
A Vision like incarnate April, warning,
With smiles and tears, Frost the Anatomy
Into his summer grave.

Ah, woe is me!

What have I dared? where am I lifted?
how
Shall I descend, and perish not? I know
That Love makes all things equal: I have heard
By mine own heart this joyous truth averred:
The spirit of the worm beneath the sod
In love and worship, blends itself with God.

Spouse! Sister! Angel! Pilot of the Fate
Whose course has been so starless! Oh, too late
Belovéd! Oh, too soon adored, by me!
For in the fields of immortality
My spirit should at first have worshipped thine,
A divine presence in a place divine;
Or should have moved beside it on this earth,
A shadow of that substance, from its birth;
But not as now:—I love thee; yes, I feel
That on the fountain of my heart a seal

Is set, to keep its waters pure and bright
For thee, since in those *tears* thou hast
delight.

We—are we not formed, as notes of
music are,

For one another, though dissimilar;
Such difference without discord, as can
make

Those sweetest sounds, in which all
spirits shake

As trembling leaves in a continuous air?

Thy wisdom speaks in me, and bids
me dare

Beacon the rocks on which high hearts
are wrecked.

I never was attached to that great sect,
Whose doctrine is, that each one should
select

Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend,
And all the rest, though fair and wise,
commend

To cold oblivion, though it is in the
code

Of modern morals, and the beaten road
Which those poor slaves with weary
footsteps tread,

Who travel to their home among the
dead

By the broad highway of the world, and
so

With one chained friend, perhaps a
jealous foe,

The dreariest and the longest journey go.

True Love in this differs from gold
and clay

That to divide is not to take away.

Love is like understanding, that grows
bright,

Gazing on many truths; 'tis like thy
light,

Imagination! which from earth and sky,
And from the depths of human phan-
tasy,

As from a thousand prisms and mirrors,
fills

The Universe with glorious beams, and
kills

Error, the worm, with many a sun-like
arrow

Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow
The heart that loves, the brain that
contemplates,

The life that wears, the spirit that
creates

One object, and one form, and builds
thereby

A sepulchre for its eternity.

Mind from its object differs most in
this:

Evil from good; misery from happiness;
The baser from the nobler; the impure
And frail, from what is clear and must
endure.

If you divide suffering and dross, you
may

Diminish till it is consumed away;
If you divide pleasure and love and
thought,

Each part exceeds the whole; and we
know not

How much, while any yet remains un-
shared,

Of pleasure may be gained, of sorrow
spared:

This truth is that deep well, whence
sages draw

The unenvied light of hope; the eternal
law

By which those live, to whom this world
of life

Is as a garden ravaged, and whose strife
Tills for the promise of a later birth

The wilderness of this Elysian earth.

There was a Being whom my spirit
oft

Met on its visioned wanderings, far
aloft,

In the clear golden prime of my youth's
dawn,

Upon the fairy isles of sunny lawn,
Amid the enchanted mountains, and the
caves

Of divine sleep, and on the air-like
waves

Of wonder-level dream, whose tremu-
lous floor

Paved her light steps;—on an imagined
shore,

Under the gray beak of some promon-
tory

She met me, robed in such exceeding
glory,

That I beheld her not. In solitudes
Her voice came to me through the
whispering woods,

And from the fountains, and the odors
deep

Of flowers, which, like lips murmuring
in their sleep

Of the sweet kisses which had lulled
them there,

Breathed but of *her* to the enamored air;
And from the breezes whether low or
loud,

And from the rain of every passing cloud,

And from the singing of the summer
birds,
And from all sounds, all silence. In
the words
Of antique verse and high romance,—in
form,
Sound, color—in whatever checks that
Storm
Which with the shattered present chokes
the past ;
And in that best philosophy, whose taste
Makes this cold common hell, our life, a
doom
As glorious as a fiery martyrdom ;
Her Spirit was the harmony of truth.—

Then, from the caverns of my dreamy
youth
I sprang, as one sandalled with plumes
of fire,
And towards the loadstar of my one
desire,
I flitted, like a dizzy moth, whose flight
Is as a dead leaf's in the owlet light,
When it would seek in Hesper's setting
sphere
A radiant death, a fiery sepulchre,
As if it were a lamp of earthly flame.—
But She, whom prayers or tears then
could not tame,
Passed, like a God throned on a wingéd
planet,
Whose burning plumes to tenfold swift-
ness fan it,
Into the dreary cone of our life's shade ;
And as a man with mighty loss dismayed,
I would have followed, though the
grave between
Yawned like a gulf whose spectres are
unseen :
When a voice said :—" O Thou of hearts
the weakest.
The phantom is beside thee whom thou
seekest."
Then I—" Where?" the world's echo
answered " where !"
And in that silence, and in my despair,
I questioned every tongueless wind that
flew
Over my tower of mourning, if it knew
Whither 'twas fled, this soul out of my
soul ;
And murmured names and spells which
have control
Over the sightless tyrants of our fate ;
But neither prayer nor verse could dis-
sipate
The night which closed on her ; nor
uncreate

That world within this Chaos, mine and
me,
Of which she was the veiled Divinity.
The world I say of thoughts that wor-
shipped her :
And therefore I went forth, with hope
and fear
And every gentle passion sick to death,
Feeding my course with expectation's
breath,
Into the wintry forest of our life ;
And struggling through its error with
vain strife,
And stumbling in my weakness and my
haste,
And half bewildered by new forms, I past
Seeking among those untaught foresters
If I could find one form resembling hers,
In which she might have masked her-
self from me.
There,—One, whose voice was venoméd
melody
Sate by a well, under blue nightshade
bowers ;
The breath of her false mouth was like
faint flowers,
Her touch was as electric poison,—flame
Out of her looks into my vitals came,
And from her living cheeks and bosom
flew
A killing air, which pierced like honey-
dew
Into the core of my green heart, and lay
Upon its leaves ; until, as hair grown gray
O'er a young brow, they hid its unblown
prime
With ruins of unseasonable time.

In many mortal forms I rashly sought
The shadow of that idol of my thought.
And some were fair—but beauty dies
away :
Others were wise—but honeyed words
betray :
And One was true—oh ! why not true
to me?
Then, as a hunted deer that could not
flee,
I turned upon my thoughts, and stood
at bay,
Wounded and weak and panting ; the
cold day
Trembled, for pity of my strife and pain.
When, like a noonday dawn, there
shone again
Deliverance. One stood on my path
who seemed
As like the glorious shape which I had
dreamed,

As is the Moon, whose changes ever run
 Into themselves, to the eternal Sun ;
 The cold chaste Moon, the Queen of
 Heaven's bright isles,
 Who makes all beautiful on which she
 smiles,
 That wandering shrine of soft yet icy
 flame
 Which ever is transformed, yet still the
 same,
 And warms not but illumines. Young
 and fair
 As the descended Spirit of that sphere,
 She hid me, as the Moon may hide the
 night
 From its own darkness, until all was
 bright
 Between the Heaven and Earth of my
 calm mind,
 And, as a cloud charioted by the wind,
 She led me to a cave in that wild place,
 And sate beside me, with her downward
 face
 Illumining my slumbers, like the Moon
 Waxing and waning o'er Endymion.
 And I was laid asleep, spirit and limb,
 And all my being became bright or dim
 As the Moon's image in a summer sea,
 According as she smiled or frowned on
 me ;
 And there I lay, within a chaste cold
 bed :
 Alas, I then was nor alive nor dead ;—
 For at her silver voice came Death and
 Life,
 Unmindful each of their accustomed
 strife,
 Masked like twin babes, a sister and a
 brother,
 The wandering hopes of one abandoned
 mother,
 And through the cavern without wings
 they flew,
 And cried " Away, he is not of our
 crew."
 I wept, and though it be a dream, I
 weep.

What storms then shook the ocean of
 my sleep,
 Blotting that Moon, whose pale and
 waning lips
 Then shrank as in the sickness of
 eclipse ;—
 And how my soul was as a lampless sea,
 And who was then its Tempest ; and
 when She,
 The Planet of that hour, was quenched,
 what frost

Crept o'er those waters, till from coast
 to coast
 The moving billows of my being fell
 Into a death of ice, immovable ;—
 And then—what earthquakes made it
 gape and split,
 The white Moon smiling all the while
 on it,
 These words conceal :—If not, each word
 would be
 The key of stanchless tears. Weep not
 for me !

At length, into the obscure Forest
 came
 The Vision I had sought through grief
 and shame.
 Athwart that wintry wilderness of
 thorns
 Flashed from her motion splendor like
 the Morn's
 And from her presence life was radiated
 Through the gray earth and branches
 bare and dead ;
 So that her way was paved, and roofed
 above
 With flowers as soft as thoughts of bud-
 ding love ;
 And music from her respiration spread
 Like light,—all other sounds were pene-
 trated
 By the small, still, sweet spirit of that
 sound,
 So that the savage winds hung mute
 around ;
 And odors warm and fresh fell from her
 hair,
 Dissolving the dull cold in the frere air :
 Soft as an Incarnation of the Sun,
 When light is changed to love, this
 glorious One
 Floated into the cavern where I lay,
 And called my Spirit, and the dreaming
 clay
 Was lifted by the thing that dreamed
 below
 As smoke by fire, and in her beauty's
 glow
 I stood, and felt the dawn of my long
 night
 Was penetrating me with living light :
 I knew it was the Vision veiled from me
 So many years—that it was Emily.

Twin Spheres of light who rule this
 passive Earth,
 This world of love, this *me* ; and into
 birth [dart
 Awaken all its fruits and flowers, and

Our ministers, along the boundless Sea,
Treading each other's heels, unheededly.
It is an Isle under Ionian skies,
Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise,
And, for the harbors are not safe and
good,

This land would have remained a soli-
tude

But for some pastoral people native
there,

Who from the Elysian, clear, and golden
air

Draw the last spirit of the age of gold,
Simple and spirited; innocent and bold.
The blue Ægean girds this chosen home,
With ever-changing sound and light and
foam,

Kissing the sifted sands, and caverns
hoar;

And all the winds wandering along the
shore

Undulate with the undulating tide:
There are thick woods where sylvan
forms abide:

And many a fountain, rivulet, and pond,
As clear as elemental diamond,
Or serene morning air; and far beyond,
The mossy tracks made by the goats
and deer

(Which the rough shepherd treads but
once a year),

Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers,
and halls

Built round with ivy, which the water-
falls

Illumining, with sound that never fails
Accompany the noonday nightingales;
And all the place is peopled with sweet
airs;

The light clear element which the isle
wears

Is heavy with the scent of lemon-flowers,
Which floats like mist laden with unseen
showers

And falls upon the eyelids like faint
sleep;

And from the moss violets and jonquils
peep,

And dart their arrowy odor through the
brain

Till you might faint with that delicious
pain,

And every motion, odor, beam, and tone
With that deep music is in unison:
Which is a soul within the soul—they
seem

Like echoes of an antenatal dream.—

It is an isle 'twixt Heaven, Air, Earth,
and Sea,

Cradled, and hung in clear tranquility;
Bright as that wandering Eden Lucifer,
Washed by the soft blue Oceans of
young air,

It is a favored place. Famine or Blight,
Pestilence, War, and Earthquake, never
light

Upon its mountain-peaks; blind vul-
tures, they

Sail onward far upon their fatal way:
The winged storms, chanting their
thunder-psalm

To other lands, leave azure chasms of
calm

Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,
From which its fields and woods ever
renew

Their green and golden immortality.

And from the sea there rise, and from
the sky

There fall, clear exhalations, soft and
bright,

Veil after veil, each hiding some delight,
Which Sun or Moon or zephyr draw
aside,

Till the isle's beauty, like a naked bride
Glowing at once with love and loveli-
ness,

Blushes and trembles at its own excess:
Yet, like a buried lamp, a Soul no less
Burns in the heart of this delicious isle,
An atom of th' Eternal, whose own
smile

Unfolds itself, and may be felt, not seen
O'er the gray rocks, blue waves, and
forests green,

Filling their bare and void interstices.—
But the chief marvel of the wilderness
Is a lone dwelling, built by whom or
how

None of the rustic island-people know;
'Tis not a tower of strength, though
with its height

It overtops the woods; but, for delight,
Some wise and tender Ocean-King, ere
crime

Had been invented, in the world's young
prime,

Reared it, a wonder of that simple time.
An envy of the isles, a pleasure-house
Made sacred to his sister and his spouse.
It scarce seems now a wreck of human
art,

But, as it were Titanic; in the heart
Of Earth having assumed its form, then
grown

Out of the mountains, from the living
stone.

Lifting itself in caverns light and high'

For all the antique and learned imagery
Has been erased, and in the place of it
The ivy and the wild-vine interknit
The volumes of 'their many twining
stems ;

Parasite flowers illume with dewy gems
The lampless halls, and when they fade,
the sky

Peeps through their winter-woof of
tracery

With Moonlight patches, or star atoms
keen,

Or fragments of the day's intense
serene ;—

Working mosaic on their Parian floors.
And, day and night, aloof, from the
high towers

And terraces, the Earth and Ocean seem
To sleep in one another's arms, and dream
Of waves, flowers, clouds, woods, rocks,
and all that we

Read in their smiles, and call reality.

This isle and house are mine, and I
have vowed

Thee to be lady of the solitude.—

And I have fitted up some chambers
there

Looking towards the golden Eastern air,
And level with the living winds, which
flow

Like waves above the living waves
below.—

I have sent books and music there, and
all

Those instruments with which high
spirits call

The future from its cradle, and the past
Out of its grave, and make the present
last

In thoughts and joys which sleep, but
cannot die,

Folded within their own eternity.

Our simple life wants little, and true
taste

Hires not the pale drudge Luxury, to
waste

The scene it would adorn, and therefore
still,

Nature with all her children, haunts the
hill.

The ring-dove, in the embowering ivy,
yet

Keeps up her love-lament, and the owls
flit

Round the evening tower, and the young
stars glance

Between the quick bats in their twilight
dance ;

The spotted deer bask in the fresh
moonlight

Before our gate, and the slow, silent
night

Is measured by the pants of their calm
sleep.

Be this our home in life, and when years
heap

Their withered hours, like leaves, on
our decay,

Let us become the overhanging day,

The living soul of this Elysian isle,

Conscious, inseparable, one. Meanwhile
We two will rise, and sit, and walk

together,

Under the roof of blue Ionian weather,
And wander in the meadows, or ascend

The mossy mountains, where the blue
heavens bend

With lightest winds, to touch their para-
mour ;

Or linger, where the pebble-paven shore,
Under the quick, faint kisses of the sea

Trembles and sparkles as with ecstasy,—
Possessing and posset by all that is

Within that calm circumference of bliss,
And by each other, till to love and live

Be one :—or, at the noontide hour, arrive
Where some old cavern hoar seems yet

to keep

The moonlight of the expired night
asleep,

Through which the awakened day can
never peep ;

A veil for our seclusion, close as Night's,
Where secure sleep may kill thine

innocent lights ;

Sleep, the fresh dew of languid love, the
rain

Whose drops quench kisses till they
burn again.

And we will talk, until thought's melody
Become too sweet for utterance, and it

die

In words, to live again in looks, which
dart

With thrilling tone into the voiceless
heart,

Harmonising silence without a sound.

Our breath shall intermix, our bosoms
bound,

And our veins beat together ; and our
lips

With other eloquence than words, eclipse
The soul that burns between them, and

the wells

Which boil under our being's inmost
cells,

The fountains of our deepest life, shall be

Confused in passion's golden purity,
As mountain-springs under the morning
Sun.

We shall become the same, we shall be
one

Spirit within two frames, oh ! wherefore
two ?

One passion in twin-hearts, which grows
and grew,

Till like two meteors of expanding flame,
Those spheres instinct with it become

the same,
Touch, mingle, are transfigured ; ever
still

Burning, yet ever unconsumable :
In one another's substance finding food,

Like flames too pure and light and un-
imbued

To nourish their bright lives with baser
prey,

Which point to Heaven and cannot pass
away :

One hope within two wills, one will
beneath

Two overshadowing minds, one life, one
death,

One Heaven, one Hell, one immortality,
And one annihilation. Woe is me !

The wingéd words on which my soul
would pierce

Into the height of love's rare Universe,
Are chains of lead around its flight of

fire—
I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire !

Weak Verses, go, kneel at your
Sovereign's feet.

And say :—" We are the masters of thy
slave ;

What wouldst thou with us and ours
and thine ?"

Then call your sisters from Oblivion's
cave,

All singing loud : " Love's very pain is
sweet,

But its reward is in the world divine
Which, if not here, it builds beyond the

grave."
So shall ye live when I am there. Then
haste

Over the hearts of men, until ye meet
Marina, Vanna, Primus, and the rest,

And bid them love each other and be
blest ;

And leave the troop which errs, and
which reproves,

And come and be my guest,—for I am
Love's.

1821. 1821.

W.

TO NIGHT

SWIFTLY walk o'er the western wave
Spirit of Night !

Out of thy misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight,

Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—

Swift be thy flight !

Wrap thy form in a mantle gray,
Star-inwrought !

Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day ;
Kiss her until she be wearied out,

Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land
Touching all with thine opiate wand—

Come, long sought !

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee ;

When light rode high, and the dew was
gone,

And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,

Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
Wouldst thou me ?

Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,

Shall I nestle near thy side ?
Wouldst thou me ?—And I replied,

No, not thee !

Death will come when thou art dead
Soon, too soon—

Sleep will come when thou art fled ;
Of neither would I ask the boon

I ask of thee, beloved Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,

Come soon, soon !

1821. 1824.

TIME

UNFATHOMABLE Sea ! whose waves are
years,

Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep
woe

Are brackish with the salt of human
tears !

Thou shoreless flood, which in thy
ebb and flow

Claspest the limits of mortality !
And sick of prey, yet howling on for

more,
Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable
shore ;

Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Unfathomable Sea? 1821. 1824.

SONNET: POLITICAL GREATNESS

NOR happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,
Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms or arts,
Shepherd those herds whom tyranny makes tame;
Verse echoes not one beating of their hearts,
History is but the shadow of their shame,
Art veils her glass, or from the pageant starts
As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,
Staining that Heaven with obscene imagery
Of their own likeness. What are numbers knit
By force or custom? Man who man would be,
Must rule the empire of himself; in it
Must be supreme, establishing his throne
On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy
Of hopes and fears, being himself alone.
1821. 1824.

MUTABILITY

THE flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow dies;
All that we wish to stay
Tempt and then flies.
What is this world's delight?
Lightning that mocks the night,
Brief even as bright.

Virtue, how frail it is!
Friendship how rare!
Love, how it sells poor bliss
For proud despair!
But we, though soon they fall,
Survive their joy, and all
Which ours we call.

Whilst skies are blue and bright,
Whilst flowers are gay,
Whilst eyes that change ere night
Make glad the day;
Whilst yet the calm hours creep,
Dream thou—and from thy sleep
Then wake to weep.
1821. 1824.

A LAMENT

O world! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb
Trembling at that where I had stood
before;
When will return the glory of your
prime?
No more—Oh, never more!

Out of the day and night
A joy has taken flight;
Fresh spring, and summer, and winter
hoar,
Move my faint heart with grief, but with
delight
No more—Oh, never more!
1821. 1824.

TO —

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory—
Odors, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken,

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art
gone
Love itself shall slumber on.
1821. 1824.

✓J.

ADONAI

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS,
AUTHOR OF ENDYMION, HYPERION, ETC.

Ἀστὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἑλαμπες ἐν ζωοῖσιν Ἐὼς
Νῦν δὲ θανὼν λάμπεις Ἐσπερος ἐν φθιμένοις.
PLATO.

I WEEP for Adonais—he is dead!
Oh weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear
a head!
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all
years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure
compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow! Say:
“With me
Died Adonais; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall
be
An echo and a light unto eternity!”

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when
he lay,
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft
which flies

In darkness? where was lorn Urania
 When Adonais died? With veiled eyes,
 'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
 She sate, while one, with soft enamored
 breath,
 Rekindled all the fading melodies
 With which, like flowers that mock
 the corse beneath,
 He had adorned and hid the coming bulk
 of death.

Oh weep for Adonais—he is dead!
 Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and
 weep!
 Yet wherefore? Quench within their
 burning bed
 Thy fiery tears, and let thy lov'd heart
 keep,
 Like his, a mute and uncomplaining
 sleep;
 For he is gone, where all things wise
 and fair
 Descend;—oh, dream not that the am-
 orous Deep
 Will yet restore him to the vital air;
 Death feeds on his mute voice, and
 laughs at our despair.

Most musical of mourners, weep again
 Lament anew, Urania!—He died,
 Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
 Blind, old, and lonely, when his
 country's pride,
 The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,
 Trampled and mocked with many a
 loathed rite
 Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
 Into the gulf of death; but his clear
 Sprite
 Yet reigns o'er earth; the third among
 the sons of light.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
 Not all to that bright station dared to
 climb;
 And happier they their happiness who
 knew,
 Whose tapers yet burn through that
 night of time
 In which suns perished; others more
 sublime,
 Struck by the envious wrath of man
 or God,
 Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent
 prime;
 And some yet live, treading the thorny
 road,
 Which leads, through toil and hate, to
 Fame's serene abode.

But now, thy youngest, dearest one
 has perished,
 The nursling of thy widowhood, who
 grew,
 Like a pale flower by some sad maiden
 cherished,
 And fed with true love tears, instead of
 dew;
 Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
 Thy extreme hope; the loveliest and
 the last,
 The bloom, whose petals nipt before
 they blew
 Died on the promise of the fruit, is
 waste;
 The broken lily lies—the storm is over-
 past.

To that high Capital, where kingly Death
 Keeps his pale court in beauty and
 decay,
 He came; and bought, with price of
 purest breath,
 A grave among the eternal. — Come
 away!
 Haste, while the vault of blue Italian
 day
 Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still
 He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;
 Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
 Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all
 ill.

He will awake no more, oh, never
 more!—
 Within the twilight chamber spreads
 apace,
 The shadow of white Death, and at the
 door
 Invisible Corruption waits to trace
 His extreme way to her dim dwelling-
 place;
 The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and
 awe
 Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to
 deface
 So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law
 Of change shall o'er his sleep the mortal
 curtain draw.

Oh weep for Adonais! — The quick
 Dreams,
 The passion-winged Ministers of thought,
 Who were his flocks, whom near the
 living streams
 Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he
 taught
 The love which was its music, wander
 not,—

Wander no more, from kindling brain to
brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung ;
and mourn their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their
sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find
a home again.

And one with trembling hands clasps
his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings,
and cries ;

“ Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not
dead ;

See, on the silken fringe of his faint
eyes,

Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there
lies

A tear some Dream has loosened from
his brain.”

Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise !

She knew not 'twas her own ; as with no
stain

She faded, like a cloud which had out-
wept its rain.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs as if embalming
them ;

Another clipt her profuse locks, and
threw

The wreath upon him, like an anadem,
Which frozen tears instead of pearls
beget ;

Another in her wilful grief would
break

Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to
stem

A greater loss with one which was more
weak ;

And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen
cheek.

Another Splendor on his mouth alit,
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw
the breath

Which gave it strength to pierce the
guarded wit,

And pass into the panting heart be-
neath

With lightning and with music : the
damp death

Quenched its caress upon his icy lips ;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath

Of moonlight vapor, which the cold
night clips,

It flushed through his pale limbs, and
passed to its eclipse.

And others came . . . Desires and
Adorations,

Wingèd Persuasions and veiled Des-
tinies,

Splendors and Glooms, and glimmering
Incarnations

Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phan-
tasies ;

And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by
the gleam

Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp ;—the moving pomp

might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal
stream.

Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal
stream.

All he had loved, and moulded into
thought,

From shape, and hue, and odor, and
sweet sound,

Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watchtower, and her hair
unbound,

Wet with the tears which should adorn
the ground,

Dimmed the ærial eyes that kindle day ;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,

Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing
in their dismay.

And the wild winds flew round, sobbing
in their dismay.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless moun-
tains,

And feeds her grief with his remembered
lay,

And will no more reply to winds or
fountains,

Or amorous birds perched on the young
green spray,

Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing
day ;

Since she can mimic not his lips, more
dear

Than those for whose disdain she pined
away

Into a shadow of all sounds :—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the
woodmen hear.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and
she threw down

Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn
were,

Or they dead leaves ; since her delight is
flown

For whom should she have waked the
sullen year ?

To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear

Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
 Thou Adonais: wan they stand and
 sere
 Amid the faint companions of their
 youth,
 With dew all turned to tears; odor, to
 sighing ruth.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
 Mourns not her mate with such melodi-
 ous pain;
 Not so the eagle, who like thee could
 scale
 Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's
 domain
 Her mighty youth with morning, doth
 complain,
 Soaring and screaming round her empty
 nest,
 As Albion wails for thee; the curse of
 Cain
 Light on his head who pierced thy inno-
 cent breast
 And scared the angel soul that was its
 earthly guest!

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and
 gone,
 But grief returns with the revolving
 year;
 The airs and streams renew their joyous
 tone:
 The ants, the bees, the swallows re-
 appear;
 Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead
 Seasons' bier;
 The amorous birds now pair in every
 brake,
 And build their mossy homes in field and
 brere;
 And the green lizard, and the golden
 snake,
 Like unimprisoned flames, out of their
 trance awake.

Through wood and stream and field and
 hill and Ocean
 A quickening life from the Earth's heart
 has burst
 As it has ever done, with change and
 motion,
 From the great morning of the world
 when first
 God dawned on Chaos; in its stream im-
 mersed
 The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer
 light;
 All baser things pant with life's sacred
 thirst;

Diffuse themselves; and spend in love's
 delight,
 The beauty and the joy of their renewed
 might.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit
 tender
 Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
 Like incarnations of the stars, when
 splendor
 Is changed to fragrance, they illumine
 death
 And mock the merry worm that wakes
 beneath;
 Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone
 which knows
 Be as a sword consumed before the
 sheath
 By sightless lightning?—th' intense
 atom glows
 A moment, then is quenched in a most
 cold repose.

Alas! that all we loved of him should be
 But for our grief, as if it had not been,
 And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
 Whence are we, and why are we? of
 what scene
 The actors or spectators? Great and
 mean
 Meet massed in death, who lends what
 life must borrow.
 As long as skies are blue, and fields are
 green,
 Evening must usher night, night urge
 the morrow,
 Month follow month with woe, and year
 wake year to sorrow.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
 "Wake thou," cried Misery, "child-
 less Mother, rise
 Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy
 heart's core,
 A wound more fierce than his with tears
 and sighs."
 And all the Dreams that watched
 Urania's eyes,
 And all the Echoes whom their sister's
 song
 Had held in holy silence, cried:
 "Arise!"
 Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory
 stung,
 From her ambrosial rest the fading
 Splendor sprung.

She rose like an autumnal Night, that
 springs

Out of the East, and follows wild and drear
 The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
 Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
 Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
 So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;
 So saddened round her like an atmosphere
 Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
 Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
 Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,
 And human hearts, which to her airy tread
 Yielding not, wounded the invisible
 Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:
 And barbed tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they
 Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
 Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
 Paved with eternal flowers that underserving way.

In the death chamber for a moment Death
 Shamed by the presence of that living Might
 Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
 Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
 Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.
 "Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
 As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
 Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress
 Roused Death: Death rose and smiled, and met her vain caress.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
 Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
 And in my heartless breast and burning brain
 That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else survive,
 With food of saddest memory kept alive,
 Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
 Of thee, my Adonais! I would give

All that I am to be as thou now art!
 But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart!

"O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
 Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
 Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
 Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
 Defenceless as thou wert, oh where was then
 Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
 Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
 Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
 The moustons of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
 The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
 The vultures to the conqueror's banner true
 Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
 And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,
 When like Apollo, from his golden bow,
 The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
 And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second blow,
 They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

"The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
 He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
 Is gathered into death without a dawn,
 And the immortal stars awake again:
 So is it in the world of living men:
 A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
 Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
 It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
 Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds came,
 Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
 The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
 Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
 An early but enduring monument,
 Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song

In sorrow ; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music
from his tongue.

Midst others of less note, came one
frail Form,
A phantom among men ; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell ; he, as I
guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wil-
derness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged
way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father
and their prey.

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift—
A Love in desolation masked ;—a Power
Girt round with weakness ;—it can
scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour ;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow ;—even whilst we
speak
Is it not broken ? On the withering
flower
The killing sun smiles brightly : on a
cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while
the heart may break.

His head was bound with pansies over-
blown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and
blue ;
And a light spear topped with a cypress
cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy tresses
grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday
dew,
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it ;
of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart ;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the
hunter's dart.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears ; well knew
that gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own ;
As in the accents of an unknown land,
He sung new sorrow ; sad Urania
scanned

The Stranger's mien, and murmured :
" Who art thou ? "

He answered not, but with a sudden
hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined
brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's—oh,
that it should be so !

What softer voice is hushed over the
dead ?

Athwart what brow is that dark mantle
thrown ?

What form leans sadly o'er the white
deathbed,

In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a
moan ?

If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honored the
departed one ;

Let me not vex, with inharmonious
sighs

The silence of that heart's accepted
sacrifice.

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh !
What deaf and viperous murderer could
crown

Life's early cup with such a draught of
woe ?

The nameless worm would now itself
disown :

It felt, yet could escape the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and
wrong,

But what was howling in one breast
alone,

Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver
lyre unstrung.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy
fame !

Live ! fear no heavier chastisement from
me,

Thou noteless blot on a remembered
name !

But be thyself, and know thyself to be !
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'er-
flow :

Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling
to thee ;

Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret
brow,

And like a beaten hound tremble thou
shalt—as now.¹

¹ See the note on page 254.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
 Far from these carrion kites that scream
 below ;
 He wakes or sleeps with the enduring
 dead ;
 Thou canst not soar where he is sitting
 now.—
 Dust to the dust ! but the pure spirit
 shall flow
 Back to the burning fountain whence
 it came,
 A portion of the Eternal, which must
 glow
 Through time and change, unquench-
 ably the same,
 Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid
 hearth of shame.

Peace, peace ! he is not dead, he doth
 not sleep—
 He hath awakened from the dream of
 life—

'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep
 With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
 And in mad trance, strike with our
 spirit's knife
 Invulnerable nothings.—We decay
 Like corpses in a charnel ; fear and grief
 Convulse us and consume us day by day,
 And cold hopes swarm like worms with-
 in our living clay.

He has outsoared the shadow of our
 night ;
 Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
 And that unrest which men miscall de-
 light,
 Can touch him not and torture not again ;
 From the contagion of the world's slow
 stain
 He is secure, and now can never mourn
 A heart grown cold, a head grown gray
 in vain ;
 Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to
 burn,
 With sparkless ashes load an unlamented
 urn.

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead,
 not he ;
 Mourn not for Adonais,—Thou young
 Dawn [thee
 Turn all thy dew to splendor, for from
 The spirit thou lamentest is not gone ;
 Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan !
 Cease ye faint flowers and fountains,
 and thou Air
 Which like a mourning veil thy scarf
 hadst thrown

O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it
 bare
 Even to the joyous stars which smile on
 its despair !

He is made one with Nature : there is
 heard
 His voice in all her music, from the moan
 Of thunder to the song of night's sweet
 bird ;
 He is a presence to be felt and known
 In darkness and in light, from herb and
 stone,
 Spreading itself where'er that Power
 may move
 Which has withdrawn his being to its
 own ;
 Which wields the world with never
 wearied love,
 Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it
 above.

He is a portion of the loveliness
 Which once he made more lovely : he
 doth bear
 His part, while the one Spirit's plastic
 stress
 Sweeps through the dull dense world,
 compelling there
 All new successions to the forms they
 wear ;
 Torturing th' unwilling dross that
 checks its flight
 To its own likeness, as each mass may
 bear ;
 And bursting in its beauty and its might
 From trees and beasts and men into the
 Heaven's light.

The splendors of the firmament of time
 May be eclipsed, but are extinguished
 not ;
 Like stars to their appointed height
 they climb
 And death is a low mist which cannot
 blot
 The brightness it may veil. When lofty
 thought
 Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
 And love and life contend in it, for what
 Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live
 there
 And move like winds of light on dark
 and stormy air.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
 Rose from their thrones, built beyond
 mortal thought,
 Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton

Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he
fought

And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan, by his death
approved:

Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing
reproved.

And many more, whose names on Earth
are dark

But whose transmitted effluence cannot
die

So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.

"Thou art become as one of us," they
cry,

"It was for thee yon kingless sphere
has long

Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid an Heaven of Song.

Assume thy wingéd throne, thou Vesper
of our throng!"

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh come
forth

Fond wretch! and know thyself and
him aright.

Clasp with thy panting soul the
pendulous Earth;

As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious
might

Satiate the void circumference: then
shrink

Even to a point within our day and
night;

And keep thy heart light lest it make
thee sink

When hope has kindled hope and lured
thee to the brink.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre
Oh! not of him, but of our joy: 'tis
nought

That ages, empires, and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have
wrought;

For such as he can lend,—they borrow
not

Glory from those who made the world
their prey;

And he is gathered to the kings of
thought

Who waged contention with their time's
decay,

And of the past are all that cannot pass
away

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And where its wrecks like shattered
mountains rise,
And flowering weeds, and fragrant
copses dress

The bones of Desolation's nakedness,
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access
Where, like an infant's smile, over the
dead

A light of laughing flowers along the
grass is spread.

And gray walls moulder round, on which
dull Time

Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sub-
lime,

Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and
beneath,

A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their
camp of death

Welcoming him we lose with scarce ex-
tinguished breath.

Here pause: these graves are all too
young as yet

To have outgrown the sorrow which
consigned

Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning
mind,

Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou
find [home,

Thine own well full, if thou returnest
Of tears and gall. From the world's
bitter wind

Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to be-
come?

The One remains, the many change and
pass;

Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's
shadows fly;

Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.

—Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which
thou dost seek!

Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure
sky, [are weak

Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words,
The glory they transfuse with fitting
truth to speak.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink,
my Heart?

Thy hopes are gone before: from all
things here

They have departed; thou shouldst now
depart!

A light is past from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still
is dear

Attracts to crush, repels to make thee
wither.

The soft sky smiles,—the low wind
whispers near;

'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can
join together.

That Light whose smile kindles the
Universe,

That Beauty in which all things work
and move,

That Benediction which the eclipsing
Curse

Of birth can quench not, that sustain-
ing Love

Which through the web of being blindly
wove

By man and beast and earth and air and
sea,

Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst; now beams

on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold
mortality.

The breath whose might I have invoked
in song

Descends on me; my spirit's bark is
driven,

Far from the shore, far from the trem-
bling throng

Whose sails were never to the tempest
given;

The massy earth and spheréd skies are
riven!

I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst burning through the inmost veil

of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,

Beacons from the abode where the
Eternal are. 1821. 1821.

LIFE MAY CHANGE, BUT IT MAY FLY NOT

LIFE may change, but it may fly not;

Hope may vanish, but can die not;

Truth be veiled, but still it burneth;

Love repulsed,—but it returneth!

Yet were life a charnel where
Hope lay coffined with Despair;
Yet were truth a sacred lie,
Love were lust—If Liberty

Lent not life its soul of light,
Hope its iris of delight,
Truth its prophet's robe to wear,
Love its power to give and bear.

From *Hellas*. 1821. 1822.

WORLDS ON WORLDS ARE ROLL- ING EVER

WORLDS on worlds are rolling ever
From creation to decay,
Like the bubbles on a river
Sparkling, bursting, borne away.
But they are still immortal
Who, through birth's orient portal
And death's dark chasm hurrying to and
fro,
Clothe their unceasing flight
In the brief dust and light
Gathered around their chariots as they
go;
New shapes they still may weave,
New gods, new laws receive,
Bright or dim are they as the robes they
last
On Death's bare ribs had cast.

A power from the unknown God,
A Promethean conqueror came;
Like a triumphal path he trod
The thorns of death and shame.
A mortal shape to him
Was like the vapor dim
Which the orient planet animates with
light;
Hell, Sin, and Slavery came,
Like bloodhounds mild and tame,
Nor preyed, until their Lord had taken
flight;
The moon of Mahomet
Arose, and it shall set:
While blazoned as on heaven's immortal
noon
The cross leads generations on.

Swift as the radiant shapes of sleep
From one whose dreams are Paradise
Fly, when the fond wretch wakes to
weep,
And day peers forth with her blank
eyes;
So fleet, so faint, so fair,
The Powers of earth and air
Fled from the folding star of Bethlehem;

Apollo, Pan, and Love,
And even Olympian Jove
Grew weak, for killing Truth had glared
on them;
Our hills and seas and streams
Dispeopled of their dreams,
Their waters turned to blood, their dew
to tears,
Wailed for the golden years.
From *Hellas*. 1821. 1822.

SONGS FROM HELLAS

DARKNESS has dawned in the East
On the noon of time:
The death-birds descend to their feast,
From the hungry clime.
Let Freedom and Peace flee far
To a sunnier strand,
And follow Love's folding star
To the Evening land!

The young moon has fed
Her exhausted horn,
With the sunset's fire:
The weak day is dead,
But the night is not born;
And, like loveliness panting with wild
desire [light,
While it trembles with fear and de-
Hesperus flies from awakening night,
And pants in its beauty and speed with
light
Fast flashing, soft, and bright.
Thou beacon of love! thou lamp of the
free!
Guide us far, far away,
To climes where now veiled by the
ardor of day
Thou art hidden
From waves on which weary noon
Faints in her summer swoon,
Between Kingless continents sinless
as Eden, [lably
Around mountains and islands invio-
Prankt on the sapphire sea.

Through the sunset of hope,
Like the shapes of a dream,
What Paradise islands of glory
gleam!
Beneath Heaven's cope,
Their shadows more clear float by—
The sound of their oceans, the light
of their sky,
The music and fragrance their soli-
tudes breathe
Burst, like morning on dream, or like
Heaven on death

Through the walls of our prison;
And Greece, which was dead, is arisen!
1821. 1822.

THE WORLD'S GREAT AGE BEGINS
ANEW

THE world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn:
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires
gleam,
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter *Hellas* rears its mountains
From waves serener far;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning star.
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies.
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

Oh, write no more the tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be!
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free:
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendor of its prime;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or Heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than One who rose,
Than many unsubdued:¹

¹ *Saturn and Love* were among the deities of a real or imaginary state of innocence and happiness. All those who fell, or the Gods of Greece, Asia, and Egypt; the *One who rose*, or Jesus Christ, at whose appearance the idols of the Pagan World were amerced of their worship; and the many unsubdued, or the monstrous objects of the idolatry of China, India, the Antarctic islands, and the native tribes of America, certainly have reigned over the understandings of men in conjunction or in succession, during periods in which all we know of evil has been in a state of portentous, and, until the revival of learning and the arts, perpetually increasing activity. (*From Shelley's Note.*)

Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

Oh, cease ! must hate and death return ?

Cease ! must men kill and die ?

Cease ! drain not to its dregs the urn

Of bitter prophecy.

The world is weary of the past,

Oh, might it die or rest at last !

Final Chorus from *Hellas*.

TO-MORROW

WHERE art thou, beloved To-morrow ?

When young and old and strong and
weak,

Rich and poor, through joy and sorrow,

Thy sweet smiles we ever seek,—

In thy place—ah ! well-a-day !

We find the thing we fled—To-day.

1821. 1824.

W

TO——

ONE word is too often profaned

For me to profane it,

One feeling too falsely disdained

For thee to disdain it.

One hope is too like despair

For prudence to smother,

And pity from thee more dear

Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love,

But wilt thou accept not

The worship the heart lifts above

And the Heavens reject not,

The desire of the moth for the star,

Of the night for the morrow,

The devotion to something afar

From the sphere of our sorrow ?

1821. 1824.

WITH A GUITAR, TO JANE

ARIEL to Miranda.—Take

This slave of Music, for the sake

Of him who is the slave of thee,

And teach it all the harmony

In which thou canst, and only thou,

Make the delighted spirit glow,

Till joy denies itself again,

And, too intense, is turned to pain ;

For by permission and command

Of thine own Prince Ferdinand,

Poor Ariel sends this silent token

Of more than ever can be spoken ;

Your guardian spirit, Ariel, who,

From life to life, must still pursue

Your happiness ;—for thus alone

Can Ariel ever find his own.

From Prospero's enchanted cell,

As the mighty verses tell,

To the throne of Naples, he

Lit you o'er the trackless sea,

Flitting on, your prow before,

Like a living meteor.

When you die, the silent Moon,

In her interlunar swoon,

Is not sadder in her cell

Than deserted Ariel.

When you live again on earth,

Like an unseen star of birth,

Ariel guides you o'er the sea

Of life from your nativity.

Many changes have been run,

Since Ferdinand and you begun

Your course of love, and Ariel still

Has tracked your steps, and served

your will ;

Now, in humbler, happier lot,

This is all remembered not ;

And now, alas ! the poor sprite is

Imprisoned, for some fault of his,

In a body like a grave ;—

From you he only dares to crave,

For his service and his sorrow,

A smile to-day, a song to-morrow.

The artist who this idol wrought,

To echo all harmonious thought,

Felled a tree, while on the steep

The woods were in their winter sleep,

Rocked in that repose divine

On the wind-swept Apennine ;

And dreaming, some of Autumn past,

And some of Spring approaching fast,

And some of April buds and showers,

And some of songs in July bowers,

And all of love ; and so this tree,—

Oh that such our death may be !—

Died in sleep, and felt no pain,

To live in happier form again ;

From which, beneath Heaven's fairest
star,

The artist wrought this loved Guitar,

And taught it justly to reply,

To all who question skilfully,

In language gentle as thine own ;

Whispering in enamored tone

Sweet oracles of woods and dells,

And summer winds in sylvan cells ;

For it had learnt all harmonies

Of the plains and of the skies,

Of the forests and the mountains,

And the many-voiced fountains ;

The clearest echoes of the hills,

The softest notes of falling rills,
 The melodies of birds and bees,
 The murmuring of summer seas,
 And pattering rain, and breathing dew
 And airs of evening ; and it knew
 That seldom-heard mysterious sound,
 Which, driven on its diurnal round,
 As it floats through boundless day,
 Our world enkindles on its way—
 All this it knows, but will not tell
 To those who cannot question well
 The spirit that inhabits it ;
 It talks according to the wit
 Of its companions ; and no more
 Is heard than has been felt before,
 By those who tempt it to betray
 These secrets of an elder day :
 But sweetly as its answers will
 Flatter hands of perfect skill,
 It keeps its highest, holiest tone
 For our beloved Jane alone.

1822. 1832-1833.

LINES: "WHEN THE LAMP IS
 SHATTERED"

WHEN the lamp is shattered
 The light in the dust lies dead—
 When the cloud is scattered
 The rainbow's glory is shed.
 When the lute is broken,
 Sweet tones are remembered not ;
 When the lips have spoken,
 Loved accents are soon forgot.

As music and splendor
 Survive not the lamp and the lute,
 The heart's echoes render
 No song when the spirit is mute :—
 No song but sad dirges,
 Like the wind through a ruined cell,
 Or the mournful surges
 That ring the dead seaman's knell.

When hearts have once mingled
 Love first leaves the well-built nest,
 The weak one is singled
 To endure what it once possessed.
 O Love ! who bewailest
 The frailty of all things here,
 Why choose you the frailest
 For your cradle, your home, and your
 bier ?

Its passions will rock thee
 As the storms rock the ravens on high :
 Bright reason will mock thee,
 Like the sun from a wintry sky.
 From thy nest every rafter
 Will rot, and thine eagle home
 Leave thee naked to laughter,
 When leaves fall and cold winds come.
 1822. 1824.

SONG FROM CHARLES THE FIRST

A WIDOW bird sate mourning for her
 love
 Upon a wintry bough ;
 The frozen wind crept on above,
 The freezing stream below.

There was no leaf upon the forest bare,
 No flower upon the ground,
 And little motion in the air
 Except the mill-wheel's sound.
 1822. 1824.

A DIRGE

ROUGH wind, that moanest loud
 Grief too sad for song ;
 Wild wind, when sullen cloud
 Knells all the night long ;
 Sad storm, whose tears are vain,
 Bare woods, whose branches strain,
 Deep caves and dreary main,
 Wail, for the world's wrong !
 1822. 1824.

KEATS

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KEATS

IMITATION OF SPENSER¹

Now Morning from her orient chamber
came,
And her first footsteps touch'd a verdant
hill;
Crowning its lawny crest with amber
flame,
Silv'ring the untainted gushes of its rill;
Which, pure from mossy beds, did down
distill,
And after parting beds of simple flowers,
By many streams a little lake did fill,
Which round its marge reflected woven
bowers,
And, in its middle space, a sky that never
lowers.

There the king-fisher saw his plumage
bright
Vieing with fish of brilliant dye below;
Whose silken fins, and golden scalèd
light
Cast upward, through the waves, a ruby
glow:
There saw the swan his neck of arched
snow,
And oar'd himself along with majesty;
Sparkled his jetty eyes; his feet did
show
Beneath the waves like Afric's ebony,
And on his back a fay reclined volup-
tuously.

Ah! could I tell the wonders of an isle
That in that fairest lake had placed
been,
I could e'en Dido of her grief beguile;
Or rob from aged Lear his bitter teen:
For sure so fair a place was never seen,
Of all that ever charm'd romantic eye:

¹ "It was the *Faerie Queene* that awakened his genius. In Spenser's fairy-land he was enchanted, breathed in a new world, and became another being; till, enamored of the stanza, he attempted to imitate it, and succeeded. . . . This, his earliest attempt, the 'Imitation of Spenser', is in his first volume of poems." (Quoted by Colvin from the Houghton MSS.)

It seem'd an emerald in the silver sheen
Of the bright waters; or as when on
high,
Through clouds of fleecy white, laugh'd
the cerulean sky.

And all around it dipp'd luxuriously
Slopings of verdure through the glossy
tide,
Which, as it were in gentle amity,
Rippled delighted up the flowery side;
As if to glean the ruddy tears, it tried,
Which fell profusely from the rose-tree
stem!
Haply it was the workings of its pride,
In strife to throw upon the shore a gem
Outvieing all the buds in Flora's diadem.
1813 or 1814. 1817.¹

TO SOLITUDE

O SOLITUDE! if I must with thee dwell,
Let it not be among the jumbled heap
Of murky buildings; climb with me the
steep,—
Nature's observatory—whence the dell,
Its flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell
May seem a span; let me thy vigils keep
'Mongst boughs pavilion'd where the
deer's swift leap
Startles the wild bee from the fox-glove
bell.
But though I'll gladly trace these scenes
with thee,
Yet the sweet converse of an innocent
mind,
Whose words are images of thoughts
refin'd,
Is my soul's pleasure; and it sure must be
Almost the highest bliss of human-kind,
When to thy haunts two kindred spirits
flee. ? 1815. May 5, 1816.²

¹ The dates for Keats' poems are made up from Sidney Colvin's careful study of the order of composition of the poems, in his *Life of Keats*, and from H. Buxton Forman's excellent notes in his edition of Keats' Works.

² In Leigh Hunt's *Examiner*. Probably the first lines of Keats ever printed.

HOW MANY BARDS GILD THE LAPSES OF TIME

How many bards gild the lapses of time!
A few of them have ever been the food
Of my delighted fancy,—I could brood
Over their beauties, earthly, or sublime :
And often, when I sit me down to rhyme,
These will in throngs before my mind
intrude :

But no confusion, no disturbance rude
Do they occasion ; 'tis a pleasing chime.
So the unnumber'd sounds that evening
store ;

The songs of birds—the whisp'ring of the
leaves—

The voice of waters—the great bell that
heaves

With solemn sound,—and thousand
others more,

That distance of recognizance bereaves,
Make pleasing music, and not wild up-
roar. *¶1816. 1817.*

KEEN, FITFUL GUSTS ARE WHIS- PERING HERE AND THERE

KEEN, fitful gusts are whispering here
and there

Among the bushes half leafless, and dry ;
The stars look very cold about the sky,
And I have many miles on foot to fare.
Yet feel I little of the cool bleak air,
Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,
Or of those silver lamps that burn on
high,

Or of the distance from home's pleasant
lair :

For I am brimful of the friendliness
That in a little cottage I have found ;
Of fair-hair'd Milton's eloquent distress,
And all his love for gentle Lycid drown'd ;
Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,
And faithful Petrarch gloriously
crown'd. *¶1816. 1817.*

TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG IN CITY PENT

To one who has been long in city pent
'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
And open face of heaven,—to breathe a
prayer

Full in the smile of the blue firmament.
Who is more happy, when, with heart's
content,

Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair

And gentle tale of love and languishment?
Returning home at evening, with an ear
Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright
career,

He mourns that day so soon has glided
by :

E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
That falls through the clear ethers silently.

June, 1816. 1817.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAP- MAN'S HOMER

MUCH have I travell'd in the realms of
gold,

And many goodly states and kingdoms
seen ;

Round many western islands have I
been

Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.

Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his
demesne ;

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud
and bold :

Then felt I like some watcher of the
skies

When a new planet swims into his ken ;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle
eyes

He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild sur-
mise—

Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

1816. Dec. 1, 1816.

GREAT SPIRITS NOW ON EARTH ARE SOJOURNING

GREAT spirits now on earth are sojourn-
ing ;

He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,
Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide
awake,

Catches his freshness from Archangel's
wing ;

He of the rose, the violet, the spring,
The social smile, the chain for Freedom's
sake :

And lo !—whose steadfastness would
never take

A meaner sound than Raphael's whis-
pering.

And other spirits there are standing
apart

Upon the forehead of the age to come ;

These, these will give the world another
heart
And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum
Of mighty workings in the human mart?
Listen awhile ye nations, and be dumb.
November, 1816. 1817.

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

THE poetry of earth is never dead;
When all the birds are faint with the
hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will
run
From hedge to hedge about the new-
mown mead;
That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the
lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out
with fun
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant
weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never;
On a lone winter evening, when the
frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove
there shrills
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing
ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half
lost,
The Grasshopper's among some grassy
hills. *December 30, 1816. 1817.*

SLEEP AND POETRY

“As I lay in my bed slepe full unmete
“Was unto me, but why that I ne might
“Rest I ne wist, for there n'as erthly wight
“[As I suppose] had more of hertis ese
“Than I, for I n'ad sicknesse nor dise.”
CHAUCER.

WHAT is more gentle than a wind in
summer?
What is more soothing than the pretty
hummer
That stays one moment in an open
flower,
And buzzes cheerily from bower to
bower?
What is more tranquil than a musk-
rose blowing
In a green island, far from all men's
knowing?
More healthful than the leafiness of
dales?

More secret than a nest of nightingales?
More serene than Cordelia's counte-
nance?
More full of visions than a high ro-
mance?
What, but thee, Sleep? Soft closer of
our eyes!
Low murmurer of tender lullabies!
Light hoverer around our happy pil-
lows!
Wreather of poppy buds, and weeping
willows!
Silent entangler of a beauty's tresses!
Most happy listener! when the morning
blesses
Thee for enlivening all the cheerful
eyes
That glance so brightly at the new sun-
rise.

But what is higher beyond thought than
thee?
Fresher than berries of a mountain tree!
More strange, more beautiful, more
smooth, more regal,
Than wings of swans, than doves, than
dim-seen eagle?
What is it? And to what shall I com-
pare it?
It has a glory, and nought else can
share it:
The thought thereof is awful, sweet, and
holy,
Chasing away all worldliness and folly;
Coming sometimes like fearful claps of
thunder,
Or the low rumblings earth's regions
under;
And sometimes like a gentle whispering
Of all the secrets of some wondrous
thing
That breathes about us in the vacant
air:
So that we look around with prying
stare,
Perhaps to see shapes of light, aerial
limning,
And catch soft floatings from a faint-
heard hymning;
To see the laurel wreath, on high sus-
pended,
That is to crown our name when life is
ended.
Sometimes it gives a glory to the voice,
And from the heart up-springs, rejoice!
rejoice!
Sounds which will reach the Framer of
all things,
And die away in ardent mutterings.

No one who once the glorious sun has
 seen
 And all the clouds, and felt his bosom
 clean
 For his great Maker's presence, but must
 know
 What 'tis I mean, and feel his being
 glow :
 Therefore no insult will I give his spirit,
 By telling what he sees from native
 merit.

O Poesy ! for thee I hold my pen
 That am not yet a glorious denizen
 Of thy wide heaven—Should I rather
 kneel

Upon some mountain-top until I feel
 A glowing splendor round about me
 hung,

And echo back the voice of thine own
 tongue ?

O Poesy ! for thee I grasp my pen
 That am not yet a glorious denizen
 Of thy wide heaven ; yet, to my ardent
 prayer,

Yield from thy sanctuary some clear air,
 Smoothed for intoxication by the breath
 Of flowering bays, that I may die a
 death

Of luxury, and my young spirit follow
 The morning sun-beams to the great
 Apollo

Like a fresh sacrifice ; or if I can bear
 The o'erwhelming sweets, 'twill bring
 me to the fair

Visions of all places : a bowery nook
 Will be elysium—an eternal book
 Whence I may copy many a lovely saying
 About the leaves, and flowers—about
 the playing

Of nymphs in woods, and fountains ; and
 the shade

Keeping a silence round a sleeping
 maid

And many a verse from so strange in-
 fluence

That we must ever wonder how, and
 whence

It came. Also imaginings will hover
 Round my fireside, and haply there dis-
 cover

Vistas of solemn beauty, where I'd
 wander

In happy silence, like the clear meander
 Through its lone vales ; and where I
 found a spot

Of awfuller shade, or an enchanted grot,
 Or a green hill o'erspread with chequered
 dress

Of flowers, and fearful from its love-
 liness,

Write on my tablets all that was per-
 mitted,

All that was for our human senses fitted,
 Then the events of this wide world I'd
 seize

Like a strong giant, and my spirit teaze
 Till at its shoulders it should proudly see
 Wings to find out an immortality.

Stop and consider ! life is but a day :

A fragile dew-drop on its perilous way
 From a tree's summit ; a poor Indian's
 sleep

While his boat hastens to the monstrous
 steep

Of Montmorenci. Why so sad a moan ?

Life is the rose's hope while yet unblown ;

The reading of an ever-changing tale ;

The light uplifting of a maiden's veil ;

A pigeon tumbling in clear summer air ;

A laughing school-boy, without grief or
 care

Riding the springy branches of an elm.

O for ten years, that I may overwhelm
 Myself in poesy ; so I may do the deed
 That my own soul has to itself decreed.

Then I will pass the countries that I see
 In long perspective, and continually

Taste their pure fountains. First the
 realm I'll pass

Of Flora, and old Pan ; sleep in the grass,

Feed upon apples red, and strawberries,

And choose each pleasure that my fancy
 sees ;

Catch the white-handed nymphs in
 shady places,

To woo sweet kisses from averted
 faces,—

Play with their fingers, touch their
 shoulders white

Into a pretty shrinking with a bite

As hard as lips can make it : till agreed,

A lovely tale of human life we'll read,
 And one will teach a tame dove how it
 best

May fan the cool air gently o'er my rest ;

Another, bending o'er her nimble tread,
 Will set a green robe floating round her
 head,

And still will dance with ever varied
 ease,

Smiling upon the flowers and the trees :

Another will entice me on, and on

Through almond blossoms and rich cin-
 namon ;

Till in the bosom of a leafy world

We rest in silence, like two gems up-
curl'd
In the recesses of a pearly shell.

And can I ever bid these joys farewell ?
Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life,
Where I may find the agonies, the strife
Of human hearts : for lo ! I see afar,
O'er-sailing the blue cragginess, a car
And steeds with streamy manes—the
charioteer

Looks out upon the winds with glorious
fear :

And now the numerous tramplings
quiver lightly

Along a huge cloud's ridge ; and now
with sprightly

Wheel downward come they into fresher
skies,

Tipt round with silver from the sun's
bright eyes.

Still downward with capacious whirl
they glide ;

And now I see them on a green-hill's
side

In breezy rest among the nodding stalks.
The charioteer with wond'rous gesture
talks

To the trees and mountains ; and there
soon appear

Shapes of delight, of mystery, and fear,
Passing along before a dusky space

Made, by some mighty oaks : as they
would chase

Some ever-fleeting music on they sweep.
Lo ! how they murmur, laugh, and

smile, and weep :

Some with upholden hand and mouth
severe ;

Some with their faces muffled to the ear
Between their arms ; some, clear in

youthful bloom,
Go glad and smilingly athwart the

gloom ;

Some looking back, and some with up-
ward gaze ;

Yes, thousands in a thousand different
ways

Flit onward—now a lovely wreath of
girls

Dancing their sleek hair into tangled
curls ;

And now broad wings. Most awfully
intent

The driver of those steeds is forward
bent,

And seems to listen : O that I might
know [glow.

All that he writes with such a hurrying

The visions all are fled—the car is fled
Into the light of heaven, and in their
stead

A sense of real things comes doubly
strong,

And, like a muddy stream, would bear
along

My soul to nothingness : but I will strive
Against all doubtings, and will keep

alive
The thought of that same chariot, and
the strange

Journey it went.

Is there so small a range
In the present strength of manhood, that
the high

Imagination cannot freely fly
As she was wont of old ? prepare her

steeds,
Paw up against the light, and do strange

deeds
Upon the clouds ? Has she not shewn us

all ?
From the clear space of ether, to the
small

Breath of new buds unfolding ? From
the meaning

Of Jove's large eye-brow, to the tender
greening

Of April meadows ? Here her altar
shone,

E'en in this isle ; and who could paragon
The fervid choir that lifted up a noise

Of harmony, to where it aye will poise
Its mighty self of convoluting sound,

Huge as a planet, and like that roll
round,

Eternally around a dizzy void ?
Ay, in those days the Muses were nigh

cloy'd
With honors ; nor had any other care
Than to sing out and soothe their wavy

hair.

Could all this be forgotten ? Yes, a
schism

Nurtured by foppery and barbarism,
Made great Apollo blush for this his

land.

Men were thought wise who could not
understand

His glories : with a puling infant's force
They sway'd about upon a rocking horse,

And thought it Pegasus. Ah dismal
soul'd !

The winds of heaven blew, the ocean
roll'd [blue

Its gathering waves—ye felt it not. The

Bared its eternal bosom, and the dew
Of summer nights collected still to make
The morning precious: beauty was
awake!

Why were ye not awake? But ye were
dead

To things ye knew not of,—were closely
wed

To musty laws lined out with wretched
rule

And compass vile: so that ye taught a
school

Of dolts to smooth, inlay, and clip, and
fit,

Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's
wit,

Their verses tallied. Easy was the task:
A thousand handicraftsmen wore the
mask

Of Poesy. * Ill-fated, impious race!
That blasphemed the bright Lyrist to his
face,

And did not know it,—no, they went
about,

Holding a poor, decrepit standard out
Mark'd with most flimsy mottos, and in
large

The name of one Boileau!

O ye whose charge
It is to hover round our pleasant hills!
Whose congregated majesty so fills
My boundly reverence, that I cannot
trace

Your hallowed names, in this unholy
place,

So near those common folk; did not
their shames

Affright you? Did our old lamenting
Thames

Delight you? Did ye never cluster
round

Delicious Avon, with a mournful sound,
And weep? Or did ye wholly bid adieu
To regions where no more the laurel
grew?

Or did ye stay to give a welcoming
To some lone spirits who could proudly
sing

Their youth away, and die? 'Twas even
so:

But let me think away those times of
woe:

Now 'tis a fairer season; ye have
breathed

Rich benedictions o'er us; ye have
wreathed

Fresh garlands: for sweet music has
been heard

In many places;—some has been up-
stirr'd

From out its crystal dwelling in a lake,
By a swan's ebon bill; from a thick
brake,

Nested and quiet in a valley mild,
Bubbles a pipe; fine sounds are floating
wild

About the earth: happy are ye and glad.

These things are doubtless: yet in truth
we've had

Strange thunders from the potency of
song;

Mingled indeed with what is sweet and
strong,

From majesty: but in clear truth the
themes

Are ugly clubs, the Poets Polyphemes
Disturbing the grand sea. A drainless
shower

Of light is poesy; 'tis the supreme of
power;

'Tis might half slumb'ring on its own
right arm.

The very archings of her eye-lids charm
A thousand willing agents to obey,
And still she governs with the mildest
sway:

But strength alone though of the Muses
born

Is like a fallen angel: trees uptorn,
Darkness, and worms, and shrouds, and
sepulchres

Delight it; for it feeds upon the burrs
And thorns of life; forgetting the great
end

Of poesy, that it should be a friend
To soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts
of man.

Yet I rejoice: a myrtle fairer than
E'er grew in Paphos, from the bitter
weeds

Lifts its sweet head into the air, and feeds
A silent space with ever sprouting green.
All tenderest birds there find a pleasant
screen,

Creep through the shade with jaunty
fluttering,

Nibble the little cupped flowers and sing.
Then let us clear away the choking
thorns

From round its gentle stem; let the
young fawns,

Yeaned in after times, when we are
flown,

Find a fresh sward beneath it, overgrown
With simple flowers: let there nothing be

More boisterous than a lover's bended
knee ;
Nought more ungentle than the placid
look

Of one who leans upon a closed book ;
Nought more untr tranquil than the grassy
slopes

Between two hills. All hail delightful
hopes !

As she was wont, th' imagination
Into most lovely labyrinths will be gone,
And they shall be accounted poet kings
Who simply tell the most heart-easing
things.

O may these joys be ripe before I die.

Will not some say that I presumptuously
Have spoken ? that from hastening dis-
grace

'Twere better far to hide my foolish
face ?

That whining boyhood should with re-
verence bow

Ere the dread thunderbolt could reach ?
How !

If I do hide myself, it sure shall be

In the very fane, the light of Poesy :

If I do fail, at least I will be laid

Beneath the silence of a poplar shade ;

And over me the grass shall be smooth
shaven ;

And there shall be a kind memorial
graven.

But off Despondence ! miserable bane !
They should not know thee, who athirst
to gain

A noble end, are thirsty every hour.

What though I am not wealthy in the
dower

Of spanning wisdom ; though I do not
know

The shiftings of the mighty winds that
blow

Hither and thither all the changing
thoughts

Of man : though no great minist'ring
reason sorts

Out the dark mysteries of human souls
To clear conceiving : yet there ever rolls

A vast idea before me, and I glean

Therefrom my liberty ; thence too I've
seen

The end and aim of Poesy. 'Tis clear
As anything most true ; as that the year
Is made of the four seasons—manifest
As a large cross, some old cathedral's
crest,

Lifted to the white clouds. Therefore
should I

Be but the essence of deformity,
A coward, did my very eye-lids wink
At speaking out what I have dared to
think.

Ah ! rather let me like a madman run
Over some precipice ; let the hot sun
Melt my Dedalian wings, and drive me
down

Convuls'd and headlong ! Stay ! an in-
ward frown

Of conscience bids me be more calm
awhile.

An ocean dim, sprinkled with many an
isle,

Spreads awfully before me. How much
toil !

How many days ! what desperate tur-
moil !

Ere I can have explored its widenesses.

Ah, what a task ! upon my bended knees,
I could unsay those—no, impossible !

Impossible !

For sweet relief I'll dwell

On humbler thoughts, and let this
strange assay

Begun in gentleness die so away.

E'en now all tumult from my bosom
fades :

I turn full hearted to the friendly aids
That smooth the path of honor ; brother-
hood,

And friendliness the nurse of mutual
good.

The hearty grasp that sends a pleasant
sonnet

Into the brain ere one can think upon it ;
The silence when some rhymes are
coming out ;

And when they're come, the very
pleasant rout :

The message certain to be done to-
morrow.

'Tis perhaps as well that it should be to
borrow

Some precious book from out its snug
retreat,

To cluster round it where we next shall
meet.

Scarce can I scribble on ; for lovely airs
Are fluttering round the room like doves
in pairs ;

Many delights of that glad day recalling,
When first my senses caught their tender
falling.

And with these airs come forms of
elegance

Stooping their shoulders o'er a horse's
prance,

Careless, and grand—fingers soft and round
 Parting luxuriant curls;—and the swift bound
 Of Baccus from his chariot, when his eye
 Made Ariadne's cheek look blushing.
 Thus I remember all the pleasant flow
 Of words at opening a portfolio.

Things such as these are ever harbingers
 To trains of peaceful images: the stir
 Of a swan's neck unseen among the rushes:

A linnet starting all about the bushes:
 A butterfly, with golden wings broad parted

Nestling a rose, convuls'd as though it smarted

With over pleasure—many, many more,
 Might I indulge at large in all my store
 Of luxuries: yet I must not forget
 Sleep, quiet, with his poppy coronet:
 For what there may be worthy in these rhymes

I partly owe to him: and thus, the chimes

Of friendly voices had just given place
 To as sweet a silence, when I gan retrace
 The pleasant day, upon a couch at ease.
 It was a poet's house¹ who keeps the keys
 Of pleasure's temple. Round about were hung

The glorious features of the bards who sung

In other ages—cold and sacred busts
 Smiled at each other. Happy he who trusts

To clear Futurity his darling fame!
 Then there were fauns and satyrs taking aim

At swelling apples with a frisky leap
 And reaching fingers, 'mid a luscious heap

Of vine leaves. Then there rose to view
 a fane

Of liny marble, and thereto a train
 Of nymphs approaching fairly o'er the sward:

One, loveliest, holding her white hand toward

The dazzling sun-rise: two sisters sweet
 Bending their graceful figures till they meet

Over the trippings of a little child:
 And some are hearing, eagerly, the wild

¹ Leigh Hunt's. The following lines are a description of the room in which the poem was written, with its decorations.

Thrilling liquidity of dewy piping.

See, in another picture, nymphs are wiping

Cherishingly Diana's timorous limbs;—
 A fold of lawny mantle dabbling swims
 At the bath's edge, and keeps a gentle motion

With the subsiding crystal: as when ocean

Heaves calmly its broad swellings smoothness o'er

Its rocky marge, and balances once more

The patient weeds; that now unshent by foam

Feel all about their undulating home.

Sappho's meek head was there half smiling down

At nothing; just as though the earnest frown

Of over thinking had that moment gone
 From off her brow, and left her all alone.

Great Alfred's too, with anxious, pitying eyes,

As if he always listened to the sighs

Of the goaded world; and Kosciusko's worn

By horrid suffrance—mightily forlorn.

Petrarch, outstepping from the shady green,

Starts at the sight of Laura; nor can wean

His eyes from her sweet face. Most happy they!

For over them was seen a free display
 Of out-spread wings, and from between them shone

The face of Poesy: from off her throne
 She overlook'd things that I scarce could tell.

The very sense of where I was might well

Keep Sleep aloof: but more than that there came

Thought after thought to nourish up the flame

Within my breast; so that the morning light

Surprised me even from a sleepless night;
 And up I rose refresh'd, and glad, and gay,

Resolving to begin that very day

These lines; and howsoever they be done,

I leave them as a father does his son.

‡ 1816. 1817.

AFTER DARK VAPORS HAVE
OPPRESSED OUR PLAINS

AFTER dark vapors have oppressed our
plains
For a long dreary season, comes a day
Born of the gentle South, and clears
away
From the sick heavens all unseemly
stains. [pains,
The anxious month, relieved from its
Takes as a long-lost right the feel of
May,
The eyelids with the passing coolness
play,
Like rose leaves with the drip of sum-
mer rains.
And calmest thoughts come round us—
as, of leaves
Budding,—fruit ripening in stillness,—
autumn suns
Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves,—
Sweet Sappho's cheek,—a sleeping in-
fant's breath,—
The gradual sand that through an hour-
glass runs,—
A woodland rivulet, a Poet's death.
January, 1817. February 23, 1817.

TO LEIGH HUNT, ESQ.

[Dedication of the volume of 1817]

GLORY and loveliness have passed away ;
For if we wander out in early morn,
No wreathéd incense do we see up-
borne
Into the east, to meet the smiling day :
No crowd of nymphs soft voic'd and
young, and gay,
In woven baskets bringing ears of
corn,
Roses, and pinks, and violets, to adorn
The shrine of Flora in her early May. -
But there are left delights as high as
these,
And I shall ever bless my destiny,
That in a time, when under pleasant
trees
Pan is no longer sought, I feel a free
A leafy luxury, seeing I could please
With these poor offerings, a man like
thee. *1817. 1817.*

ON SEEING THE ELGIN MARBLES

My spirit is too weak—mortality
Weighs heavily on me like unwilling
sleep,

And each imagin'd pinnacle and steep
Of godlike hardship tells me I must die
Like a sick Eagle looking at the sky.
Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep
That I have not the cloudy winds to
keep,
Fresh for the opening of the morning's
eye.
Such dim-conceiv'd glories of the brain
Bring round the heart an undescri-
bable feud ;
So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,
That mingles Grecian grandeur with
the rude
Wasting of old Time—with a billowy
main—
A sun—a shadow of a magnitude.
1817. March 9, 1817.

ON A PICTURE OF LEANDER

COME hither all sweet maidens soberly,
Down-looking aye, and with a chastened
light
Hid in the fringes of your eyelids white,
And meekly let your fair hands joinéd
be.
As if so gentle that ye could not see,
Untouched, a victim of your beauty
bright,
Sinking away to his young spirit's night,
Sinking bewildered 'mid the dreary sea :
'Tis young Leander toiling to his death ;
Nigh swooning, he doth purse his weary
lips
For Hero's cheek, and smiles against
her smile.
O horrid dream ! see how his body dips
Dead-heavy ; arms and shoulders gleam
awhile :
He's gone ; up bubbles all his amorous
breath ! *? . . . 1829.*

ON THE SEA

It keeps eternal whisperings around
Desolate shores, and with its mighty
swell
Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till
the spell
Of Hecate leaves them their old shad-
owy sound.
Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,
That scarcely will the very smallest
shell
Be moved for days from whence it some-
time fell,
When last the winds of heaven were un-
bound.

Oh ye! who have your eye-balls vexed
and tired,
Feast them upon the wideness of the
Sea;
Oh ye! whose ears are dinned with
uproar rude,
Or fed too much with cloying melody,—
Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth, and
brood
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs
quiured! *August, 1817. 1848.*

WHEN I HAVE FEARS THAT I MAY CEASE TO BE

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming
brain,
Before high pil'd books, in charact'ry,
Hold like rich garners the full-ripen'd
grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starr'd
face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of
chance;
And when I feel, fair creature of an
hour!
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the faery power
Of unreflecting love!—then on the
shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and
think
Till Love and Fame to nothingness do
sink. *1817. 1848.*

FROM ENDYMION

BOOK I

PROEM

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will
keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and
quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we
wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman
dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened
ways

Made for our searching: yes, in spite of
all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the
pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun,
the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady
boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and
clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert
make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest
brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose
blossoms:
And such too is the grandeur of the
dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or
read:
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences
For one short hour; no, even as the trees
That whisper round a temple become
soon
Dear as the temple's self, so does the
moon,
The passion poesy, glories infinite,
Haunt us till they become a cheering
light
Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,
That, whether there be shine, or gloom
o'ercast,
They always must be with us, or we die.

Therefore, 'tis with full happiness
that I
Will trace the story of Endymion.
The very music of the name has gone
Into my being, and each pleasant scene
Is growing fresh before me as the green
Of our own valleys: so I will begin
Now while I cannot hear the city's din;
Now while the early budders are just
new,
And run in mazes of the youngest hue
About old forests; while the willow trails
Its delicate amber; and the dairy pails
Bring home increase of milk. And, as
the year
Grows lush in juicy stalks, I'll smoothly
steer
My little boat, for many quiet hours,
With streams that deepen freshly into
bowers.

Many and many a verse I hope to write,
 Before the daisies, vermeil rimm'd and
 white,
 Hide in deep herbage ; and ere yet the
 bees
 Hum about globes of clover and sweet
 peas,
 I must be near the middle of my story.
 O may no wintry season, bare and hoary,
 See it half finished : but let Autumn
 bold,
 With universal tinge of sober gold,
 Be all about me when I make an end.
 And now at once, adventuresome, I send
 My herald thought into a wilderness :
 There let its trumpet blow, and quickly
 dress
 My uncertain path with green, that I
 may speed
 Easily onward, thorough flowers and
 weed.

HYMN TO PAN

O THOU, whose mighty palace roof
 doth hang
 From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth
 Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life,
 death
 Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness ;
 Who lov'st to see the hamadryads dress
 Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels
 darken ;
 And through whole solemn hours dost
 sit, and hearken
 The dreary melody of bedded reeds—
 In desolate places, where dank moisture
 breeds
 The *pipy hemlock to strange over-
 growth ;
 Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth
 Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx—do thou
 now,
 By thy love's milky brow !
 By all the trembling mazes that she ran,
 Hear us, great Pan !

O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet,
 turtles
 Passion their voices cooingly 'mong
 myrtles,
 What time thou wanderest at eventide
 Through sunny meadows, that outskirt
 the side
 Of thine enmossed realms : O thou, to
 whom
 Broad leaved fig trees even now fore-
 doom
 Their ripen'd fruitage ; yellow girted
 bees

Their golden honeycombs ; our village
 leas
 Their fairest-blossom'd beans and pop-
 pied corn ;
 The chuckling linnet its five young un-
 born,
 To sing for thee ; low creeping straw-
 berries
 Their summer coolness ; pent up butter-
 flies
 Their freckled wings ; yea, the fresh
 budding year
 All its completions—be quickly near,
 By every wind that nods the mountain
 pine,
 O forester divine !

Thou, to whom every fawn and satyr
 flies
 For willing service ; whether to surprise
 The squatted hare while in half sleeping
 fit ;
 Or upward ragged precipices flit
 To save poor lambkins from the eagle's
 maw ;
 Or by mysterious enticement draw
 Bewildered shepherds to their path
 again ;
 Or to tread breathless round the frothy
 main,
 And gather up all fancifullest shells
 For thee to tumble into Naiads' cells,
 And, being hidden, laugh at their out-
 peeping ;
 Or to delight thee with fantastic leap-
 ing,
 The while they pelt each other on the
 crown
 With silvery oak apples, and fir cones
 brown—
 By all the echoes that about thee ring,
 Hear us, O satyr king !

O Harkener to the loud clapping
 shears,
 While ever and anon to his shorn peers
 A ram goes bleating : Winder of the
 horn,
 When snouted wild-boars routing tender
 corn
 Anger our huntsman : Breather round
 our farms.
 To keep off mildews, and all weather
 harms :
 Strange ministrant of undescrib'd
 sounds,
 That come a swooning over hollow
 grounds,
 And wither drearily on barren moors :

Dread opener of the mysterious doors
 Leading to universal knowledge—see,
 Great son of Dryope,
 The many that are come to pay their
 vows
 With leaves about their brows!

Be still the unimaginable lodge
 For solitary thinkings; such as dodge
 Conception to the very bourne of
 heaven,
 Then leave the naked brain: be still
 the heaven,
 That spreading in this dull and clodded
 earth
 Gives it a touch ethereal—a new birth:
 Be still a symbol of immensity;
 A firmament reflected in a sea;
 An element filling the space between;
 An unknown—but no more: we humbly
 screen
 With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly
 bending,
 And giving out a shout most heaven-
 rending,
 Conjure thee to receive our humble
 Paean,
 Upon thy Mount Lycean!

THE COMING OF DIAN

[*Endymion speaks, to his Sister Peona.*]

“This river does not see the naked sky,
 Till it begins to progress silverly
 Around the western border of the wood,
 Whence, from a certain spot, its winding
 flood
 Seems at the distance like a crescent
 moon;
 And in that nook, the very pride of June,
 Had I been used to pass my weary eves;
 There rather for the sun unwilling leaves
 So dear a picture of his sovereign power,
 And I could witness his most kingly hour,
 When he doth lighten up the golden
 reins,
 And paces leisurely down amber plains
 His snorting four. Now when his chariot
 last
 Its beams against the zodiac-lion cast,
 There blossom'd suddenly a magic bed
 Of sacred ditamy, and poppies red:
 At which I wondered greatly, knowing
 well
 That but one night had wrought this
 flowery spell;
 And, sitting down close by, began to
 muse

What it might mean. Perhaps, thought
 I, Morpheus,
 In passing here, his owlet pinions shook;
 Or, it may be, ere matron Night uptook
 Her ebon urn, young Mercury, by stealth,
 Had dipt his rod in it: such garland
 wealth
 Came not by common growth. Thus on
 I thought,
 Until my head was dizzy and distraught.
 Moreover, through the dancing poppies
 stole
 A breeze, most softly lulling to my soul;
 And shaping visions all about my sight
 Of colors, wings, and bursts of spangly
 light;
 The which became more strange, and
 strange, and dim,
 And then were gulfd in a tumultuous
 swim:
 And then I fell asleep. Ah, can I tell
 The enchantment that afterwards befell?
 Yet it was but a dream: yet such a dream
 That never tongue, although it overteem
 With mellow utterance, like a cavern
 spring,
 Could figure out and to conception bring
 All I beheld and felt. Methought I lay
 Watching the zenith, where the milky
 way
 Among the stars in virgin splendor
 pours;
 And travelling my eye, until the doors
 Of heaven appeared to open for my flight,
 I became loth and fearful to alight
 From such high soaring by a downward
 glance:
 So kept me stedfast in that airy trance,
 Spreading imaginary pinions wide.
 When, presently, the stars began to glide,
 And faint away, before my eager view:
 At which I sigh'd that I could not pursue,
 And dropped my vision to the horizon's
 verge;
 And lo! from opening clouds, I saw
 The loveliest moon, that ever silver'd o'er
 A shell for Neptune's goblet: she did
 soar
 So passionately bright, my dazzled soul
 Commingling with her argent spheres
 did roll
 Through clear and cloudy, even when
 she went
 At last into a dark and vapory tent—
 Whereat, methought, the lidless-eyed
 train
 Of planets all were in the blue again.
 To commune with those orbs, once more
 I rais'd

My sight right upward : but it was quite
dazed

By a bright something, sailing down
apace,

Making me quickly veil my eyes and
face :

Again I look'd, and, O ye deities,

Who from Olympus watch our destinies !

Whence that completed form of all com-
pleteness ?

Whence came that high perfection of all
sweetness ?

Speak, stubborn earth, and tell me
where, O where

Hast thou a symbol of her golden hair ?

Not oat-sheaves drooping in the western
sun ; [shun

Not—thy soft hand, fair sister ! let me
Such follying before thee—yet she had,

Indeed, locks bright enough to make me
mad ;

And they were simply gordian'd up and
braided,

Leaving, in naked comeliness, unshaded,
Her pearl round ears, white neck, and

orbed brow ;
The which were blended in, I know not

how,
With such a paradise of lips and eyes,

Blush-tinted cheeks, half smiles, and
faintest sighs,

That, when I think thereon, my spirit
clings

And plays about its fancy, till the stings
Of human neighborhood envenom all.

Unto what awful power shall I call ?
To what high fane ?—Ah ! see her hover-

ing feet,
More bluely vein'd, more soft, more

whitely sweet
Than those of sea-born Venus, when she

rose
From out her cradle shell. The wind

out-blows
Her scarf into a fluttering pavilion ;

'Tis blue, and over-spangled with a mil-
lion

Of little eyes, as though thou wert to
shed,

Over the darkest, lushest blue-bell bed,
Handfuls of daisies."—"Endymion, how

strange !
Dream within dream !"—"She took an

airy range,
And then, towards me, like a very maid,

Came blushing, waning, willing, and
afraid,

And press'd me by the hand : Ah ! 'twas
too much ;

Methought I fainted at the charmed
touch,

Yet held my recollection, even as one
Who dives three fathoms where the

waters run
Gurgling in beds of coral : for anon,

I felt upmounted in that region
Where falling stars dart their artillery

forth,
And eagles struggle with the buffeting

north
That balances the heavy meteor-stone ;—

Felt too, I was not fearful, nor alone,
But lapp'd and lull'd along the danger-

ous sky.
Soon, as 't seem'd, we left our journey-

ing high,
And straightway into frightful eddies

swoop'd ;
Such as aye muster where gray time has

scoop'd
Huge dens and caverns in a mountain's

side :
Their hollow sounds arous'd me, and I

sigh'd
To faint once more by looking on my

bliss—
I was distracted ; madly did I kiss

The wooing arms which held me, and
did give

My eyes at once to death : but 'twas to
live,

To take in draughts of life from the gold
fount

Of kind and passionate looks ; to count,
and count

The moments, by some greedy help that
seem'd [deem'd

A second self, that each might be re-
And plunder'd of its load of blessedness.

Ah, desperate mortal ! I ev'n dar'd to
press

Her very cheek against my crowned lip,
And, at that moment, felt my body dip

Into a warmer air : a moment more,
Our feet were soft in flowers. There

was store
Of newest joys upon that alp. Some-

times
A scent of violets, and blossoming times,

Loiter'd around us ; then of honey cells,
Made delicate from all white-flower

bells ;
And once, above the edges of our nest,

An arch face peep'd,—an Oread as I
guess'd.

"Why did I dream that sleep o'er-
power'd me

In midst of all this heaven? Why not
 see,
 Far off, the shadows of his pinions dark,
 And stare them from me? But no, like
 a spark
 That needs must die, although its little
 beam
 Reflects upon a diamond, my sweet dream
 Fell into nothing—into stupid sleep.
 And so it was, until a gentle creep,
 A careful moving caught my waking
 ears,
 And up I started: Ah! my sighs, my
 tears,
 My clenched hands;—for lo! the poppies
 hung [sung
 Dew-dabbled on their stalks, the ouzel
 A heavy ditty, and the sullen day
 Had chidden herald Hesperus away,
 With leaden looks: the solitary breeze
 Bluster'd, and slept, and its wild self did
 tease
 With wayward melancholy; and I
 thought,
 Mark me, Peona! that sometimes it
 brought,
 Faint fare-thee-wells, and sigh-shrilled
 adieus!—
 Away I wander'd—all the pleasant hues
 Of heaven and earth had faded: deepest
 shades
 Were deepest dungeons; heaths and
 sunny glades
 Were full of pestilential light; our taintless
 rills
 Seem'd sooty, and o'er-spread with up-
 turn'd gills
 Of dying fish; the vermeil rose had blown
 In frightful scarlet, and its thorns out-
 grown
 Like spiked aloe. If an innocent bird
 Before my heedless footsteps stirr'd, and
 stirr'd
 In little journeys, I beheld in it
 A disguis'd demon, missioned to knit
 My soul with under darkness; to entice
 My stumblings down some monstrous
 precipice:
 Therefore I eager followed, and did curse
 The disappointment. Time, that aged
 nurse,
 Rock'd me to patience. Now, thank
 gentle heaven!
 These things, with all their comfortings,
 are given
 To my down-sunken hours, and with
 thee,
 Sweet sister, help to stem the ebbing sea
 Of weary life."

FROM BOOK II

INVOCATION TO THE POWER OF LOVE

O SOVEREIGN power of love! O grief!
 O balm!
 All records, saving thine, come cool, and
 calm,
 And shadowy, through the mist of
 passed years:
 For others, good or bad, hatred and tears
 Have become indolent; but touching
 thine,
 One sigh doth echo, one poor sob doth
 pine,
 One kiss brings honey-dew from buried
 days.
 The woes of Troy, towers smothering
 o'er their blaze,
 Stiff-holden shields, far-piercing spears,
 keen blades,
 Struggling, and blood, and shrieks—all
 dimly fades
 Into some backward corner of the brain;
 Yet, in our very souls, we feel amain
 The close of Troilus and Cressid sweet.
 Hence, pageant history! hence, gilded
 cheat!
 Swart planet in the universe of deeds!
 Wide sea, that one continuous murmur
 breeds
 Along the pebbled shore of memory!
 Many old rotten-timber'd boats there be
 Upon thy vaporous bosom, magnified
 To goodly vessels; many a sail of pride,
 And golden keel'd, is left unlaunch'd
 and dry.
 But wherefore this? What care, though
 owl did fly
 About the great Athenian admiral's
 mast?
 What care, though striding Alexander
 past
 The Indus with his Macedonian numbers?
 Though old Ulysses tortured from his
 slumbers
 The glutt'd Cyclops, what care?—Juliet
 leaning
 Amid her window-flowers,—sighing,—
 weaning
 Tenderly her fancy from its maiden
 snow, [flow
 Doth more avail than these: the silver
 Of Hero's tears, the swoon of Imogen,
 Fair Pastorella in the bandit's den,
 Are things to brood on with more ardency
 Than the death-day of empires. Fearfully
 Must such conviction come upon his
 head,

Who, thus far, discontent, has dared to tread,
Without one muse's smile, or kind behest,
The path of love and poesy. But rest,
In chafing restlessness, is yet more drear
Than to be crush'd, in striving to uprear
Love's standard on the battlements of song.
So once more days and nights aid me along,
Like legion'd soldiers.

FROM BOOK IV

ROUNDELAY

"O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
The natural hue of health, from vermeil lips?
To give maiden blushes
To the white rose bushes?
Or is it thy dewy hand the daisy tips?

"O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye?—
To give the glow-worm light?
Or, on a moonless night,
To tinge, on siren shores, the salt sea-spray?

"O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue?—
To give at evening pale
Unto the nightingale,
That thou mayst listen the cold dewdrops among?

"O Sorrow,
Why dost borrow
Heart's lightness from the merriment of May?—
A lover would not tread
A cowslip on the head,
Though he should dance from eve till peep of day—
Nor any drooping flower
Held sacred for thy bower,
Wherever he may sport himself and play.

"To Sorrow,
I bade good-morrow,
And thought to leave her far away behind;

But cheerly, cheerly,
She loves me dearly;
She is so constant to me, and so kind:
I would deceive her
And so leave her,
But ah! she is so constant and so kind.

"Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,
I sat a-weeping: in the whole world wide
There was no one to ask me why I wept,—
And so I kept
Brimming the water-lily cups with tears
Cold as my fears.

"Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,
I sat a-weeping: what enamor'd bride,
Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,
But hides and shrouds
Beneath dark palm trees by a riverside?

"And as I sat, over the light blue hills
There came a noise of revellers: the rills
Into the wide stream came of purple hue—

'Twas Bacchus and his crew!
The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills
From kissing cymbals made a merry din—

'Twas Bacchus and his kin!
Like to a moving vintage down they came,

Crown'd with green leaves, and faces all on flame;
All madly dancing through the pleasant valley,

To scare thee, Melancholy!
O then, O then, thou wast a simple name!

And I forgot thee, as the berried holly
By shepherds, is forgotten, when, in June,
Tall chestnuts keep away the sun and moon:—

I rush'd into the folly!

"Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,

Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood,
With sidelong laughing;
And little rills of crimson wine imbrued
His plump white arms, and shoulders,
enough white

For Venus' pearly bite;
And near him rode Silenus on his ass,
Pelted with flowers as he on did pass
Tipsily quaffing.

"Whence came ye, merry Damsels!
whence came ye!

So many, and so many, and such glee?
Why have ye left your bowers desolate,
Your lutes, and gentler fate?—

'We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the
wing,

A conquering!

Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill be-
tide,

We dance before him thorough kingdoms
wide:—

Come hither, lady fair, and joined be
To our wild minstrelsy!

"Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence
came ye!

So many, and so many, and such glee?
Why have ye left your forest haunts,
why left

Your nuts in oak-tree cleft?—

'For wine, for wine we left our kernel
tree;

For wine we left our heath, and yellow
brooms,

And cold mushrooms;

For wine we follow Bacchus through the
earth;

Great God of breathless cups and chirp-
ing mirth!—

Come hither, lady fair, and joined be
To our mad minstrelsy!

"Over wide streams and mountains great
we went, [tent,

And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy
Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,

With Asian elephants:

Onward these myriads—with song and
dance,

With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians'
prance,

Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,
Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,

Plump infant laughers mimicking the
coil

Of seamen, and stout galley-rower's toil:
With toying oars and silken sails they
glide,

Nor care for wind and tide.

"Mounted on panthers' furs and lions'
manes, [plains;

From rear to van they scour about the
A three days' journey in a moment done:

And always, at the rising of the sun,
About the wilds they hunt with spear

and horn,

On spleenful unicorn.

"I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown

Before the vine-wreath crown!

I saw parch'd Abyssinia rouse and sing

To the silver cymbals' ring!

I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce

Old Tartary the fierce!

The kings of Inde their jewel-sceptres
vail,

And from their treasures scatter pearled
hail;

Great Brahma from his mystic heaven
groans,

And all his priesthood moans,

Before young Bacchus' eye-wink turning
pale.—

Into these regions came I following
him,

Sick-hearted, weary—so I took a whim

To stray away into these forests drear

Alone, without a peer:

And I have told thee all thou mayest
hear.

"Young stranger!

I've been a ranger

In search of pleasure throughout every
clime:

Alas! 'tis not for me!

Bewitch'd I sure must be,

To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

"Come then. Sorrow!

Sweetest Sorrow!

Like an own babe I nurse thee on my
breast:

I thought to leave thee

And deceive thee,

But now of all the world I love thee best.

"There is not one,

No, no, not one

But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid;

Thou art her mother,

And her brother,

Her playmate, and her wooer in the
shade."

THE FEAST OF DIAN

Who, who from Dian's feast would be
away?

For all the golden bowers of the day
Are empty left? Who, who away would
be

From Cynthia's wedding and festivity?
Not Hesperus: lo! upon his silver
wings

He leans away for highest heaven
sings,

Snapping his lucid fingers merrily!—
 Ah, Zephyrus! art here, and Flora too!
 Ye tender bibbers of the rain and dew,
 Young playmates of the rose and daffodil,

Be careful, ere ye enter in, to fill
 Your baskets high
 With fennel green, and balm, and gold-
 en pines,
 Savory, latter-mint, and columbines,
 Cool parsley, basil sweet, and sunny
 thyme;
 Yea, every flower and leaf of every
 clime,

All gather'd in the dewy morning: hie
 Away! fly, fly!—
 Crystalline brother of the belt of heaven,
 Aquarius! to whom king Jove has given
 Two liquid pulse streams 'stead of
 feather'd wings,
 Two fan-like fountains,—thine illumin-
 ings

For Dian play:
 Dissolve the frozen purity of air;
 Let thy white shoulders silvery and
 bare
 Shew cold through watery pinions;
 make more bright
 The Star-Queen's crescent on her mar-
 riage night:

Haste, haste away!—
 Castor has tamed the planet Lion, see!
 And of the Bear has Pollux mastery:
 A third is in the race! who is the
 third,

Speeding away swift as the eagle bird?
 The tramping Centaur!
 The Lion's mane's on end: the Bear
 how fierce!

The Centaur's arrow ready seems to
 pierce

Some enemy: far forth his bow is bent
 Into the breast of heaven. He'll beshent,

Pale unrelentor,
 When he shall hear the wedding lutes a-
 playing.—

Andromeda! sweet woman! why delay-
 ing
 So timidly among the stars: come hither!
 Join this bright throng, and nimbly fol-
 low whither

They all are going.
 Danae's Son, before Jove newly bow'd,
 Has wept for thee, calling to Jove
 aloud.

Thee, gentle lady, did he disenthral:
 Ye shall for ever live and love, for all
 Thy tears are flowing.

1817. 1818.

ROBIN HOOD

No! those days are gone away,
 And their hours are old and gray,
 And their minutes buried all
 Under the down-trodden pall
 Of the leaves of many years:
 Many times have winter's shears,
 Frozen North, and chilling East,
 Sounded tempests to the feast
 Of the forest's whispering fleeces,
 Since men knew nor rent nor leases.

No, the bugle sounds no more,
 And the twanging bow no more;
 Silent is the ivory shrill
 Past the heath and up the hill;
 There is no mid-forest laugh,
 Where lone Echo gives the half
 To some wight, amaz'd to hear
 Jestings, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June
 You may go, with sun or moon,
 Or the seven stars to light you,
 Or the polar ray to right you;
 But you never may behold
 Little John, or Robin bold;
 Never one, of all the clan,
 Thrumming on an empty can
 Some old hunting ditty, while
 He doth his green way beguile
 To fair hostess Merriment,
 Down beside the pasture Trent;
 For he left the merry tale
 Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din;
 Gone, the song of Gamelyn;
 Gone, the tough-belted outlaw
 Idling in the "grené shawe;"
 All are gone away and past!
 And if Robin should be cast
 Sudden from his turfed grave,
 And if Marian should have
 Once again her forest days,
 She would weep, and he would craze:
 He would swear, for all his oaks,
 Fall'n beneath the dockyard strokes,
 Have rotted on the briny seas;
 She would weep that her wild bees
 Sang not to her—strange! that honey
 Can't be got without hard money!

So it is: yet let us sing,
 Honor to the old bow-string!
 Honor to the bugle-horn!
 Honor to the woods unshorn!
 Honor to the Lincoln green!

Honor to the archer keen!
 Honor to tight Little John,
 And the horse he rode upon!
 Honor to bold Robin Hood,
 Sleeping in the underwood!
 Honor to Maid Marian,
 And to all the Sherwood-clan!
 Though their days have hurried by,
 Let us two a burden try.
February 3, 1818. 1820.

IN A DREAR-NIGHTED DECEMBER

In a drear-nighted December,
 Too happy, happy tree,
 Thy branches ne'er remember
 Their green felicity:
 The north cannot undo them,
 With a sleety whistle through them;
 Nor frozen thawings glue them
 From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,
 Too happy, happy brook,
 Thy bubblings ne'er remember
 Apollo's summer look;
 But with a sweet forgetting,
 They stay their crystal fretting,
 Never, never petting
 About the frozen time.

Ah! would 'twere so with many
 A gentle girl and boy!
 But were there ever any
 Writhed not at passéd joy?
 To know the change and feel it,
 When there is none to heal it,
 Nor numbéd sense to steal it,
 Was never said in rhyme.
1818. 1829.

TO AILSA ROCK

HEARKEN, thou craggy ocean pyramid!
 Give answer from thy voice, the sea-
 fowls' screams!
 When were thy shoulders mantled in
 huge streams?
 When, from the sun, was thy broad fore-
 head hid?
 How long is't since the mighty power bid
 Thee heave to airy sleep from fathom
 dreams?
 Sleep in the lap of thunder or sun-
 beams,
 Or when gray clouds are thy cold cover-
 lid.
 Thou answer'st not; for thou art dead
 asleep:

Thy life is but two dead eternities—
 The last in air, the former in the deep,
 First with the whales, last with the
 eagle-skies—
 Drown'd wast thou till an earthquake
 made thee steep,
 Another cannot wake thy giant size.
July, 1818. 1819.

THE HUMAN SEASONS

FOUR Seasons fill the measure of the
 year;
 There are four seasons in the mind of
 man:
 He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
 Takes in all beauty with an easy span:
 He has his Summer, when luxuriously
 Spring's honey'd cud of youthful thought
 he loves
 To ruminate, and by such dreaming high
 Is nearest unto heaven: quiet coves
 His soul has in its Autumn, when his
 wings
 He furleth close; contented so to look
 On mists in idleness—to let fair things
 Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.
 He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
 Or else he would forego his mortal na-
 ture.
1818. 1819.

TO HOMER

STANDING aloof in giant ignorance,
 Of thee I hear and of the Cyclades,
 As one who sits ashore and longs per-
 chance
 To visit Dolphin-coral in deep seas.
 So thou wast blind;—but then the veil
 was rent,
 For Jove uncurtained Heaven to let thee
 live,
 And Neptune made for thee a spumy
 tent,
 And Pan made sing for thee his forest-
 live.
 Aye, on the shores of darkness there is
 light,
 And precipices show untrodden green,
 There is a budding morrow in mid-
 night,¹
 There is a triple sight in blindness keen;
 Such seeing hadst thou, as it once
 befell
 To Dian, Queen of Earth, and Heaven,
 and Hell.
1818. 1848.

¹ Forman records in his notes that Rossetti considered this to be "Keats' finest single line of poetry." (Keats' Works, II., 238.)

LINES
ON
THE MERMAID TAVERN

SOULS of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?
Have ye tipped drink more fine
Than mine host's Canary wine?
Or are fruits of Paradise
Sweeter than those dainty pies
Of venison? O generous food!
Drest as though bold Robin Hood
Would, with his maid Marian,
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day
Mine host's sign-board flew away,
Nobody knew whither, till
An astrologer's old quill
To a sheepskin gave the story,
Said he saw you in your glory,
Underneath a new old sign
Sipping beverage divine,
And pledging with contented smack
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?
1818. 1820.

W FANCY

EVER let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure never is at home:
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let winged Fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond
her:
Open wide the mind's cage-door,
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the Spring
Fades as does its blossoming;
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,
Cloy with tasting: What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear fagot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the caked snow is shuffled
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;

When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
Sit thee there, and send abroad,
With a mind self-overaw'd
Fancy, high-commission'd:—send her!
She has vassals to attend her:
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;
All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray:
All the heaped Autumn's wealth,
With a still, mysterious stealth:
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it:—thou shalt
hear

Distant harvest-carols clear;
Rustle of the reaped corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn:
And, in the same moment—hark!
'Tis the early April lark,
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plum'd lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearled with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its celled sleep;
And the snake all winter-thin
Cast on sunny bank its skin;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,
When the henbird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;
Acorns ripe down-pattering,
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy! let her loose;
Every thing is spoilt by use:
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,
Too much gaz'd at? Where's the maid
Whose lip mature is ever new?
Where's the eye, however blue,
Doth not weary? Where's the face
One would meet in every place?
Where's the voice, however soft,
One would hear so very oft?
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.

Let, then, winged Fancy find
 Thee a mistress to thy mind :
 Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,
 Ere the God of Torment taught her
 How to frown and how to chide ;
 With a waist and with a side
 White as Hebe's, when her zone
 Slipped its golden clasp, and down
 Fell her kirtle to her feet,
 While she held the goblet sweet,
 And Jove grew languid.—Break the
 mesh
 Of the Fancy's silken leash ;
 Quickly break her prison-string
 And such joys as these she'll bring.—
 Let the winged Fancy roam,
 Pleasure never is at home. 1818. 1820.

ISABELLA

OR

THE POT OF BASIL

A STORY FROM BOCCACCIO

FAIR Isabel, poor simple Isabel !
 Lorenzo, a young palmer in Love's
 eye !
 They could not in the self-same mansion
 dwell
 Without some stir of heart, some
 malady ;
 They could not sit at meals but feel how
 well
 It soothéd each to be the other by ;
 They could not, sure, beneath the same
 roof sleep
 But to each other dream, and nightly
 weep.
 With every morn their love grew ten-
 derer,
 With every eve deeper and tenderer
 still ;
 He might not in house, field, or garden
 stir,
 But her full shape would all his seeing
 fill ;
 And his continual voice was pleasanter
 To her, than noise of trees or hidden
 rill ;
 Her lute-string gave an echo of his name,
 She spoilt her half-done broidery with
 the same.
 He knew whose gentle hand was at the
 latch,
 Before the door had given her to his
 eyes ;

And from her chamber-window he
 would catch
 Her beauty farther than the falcon
 spies ;
 And constant as her vespers would he
 watch,
 Because her face was turn'd to the
 same skies ;
 And with sick longing all the night out-
 wear,
 To hear her morning-step upon the stair,
 A whole long month of May in this sad
 plight
 Made their cheeks paler by the break
 of June :
 "To-morrow will I bow to my delight,
 To-morrow will I ask my lady's
 boon."—
 "O may I never see another night,
 Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not
 love's tune."—
 So spake they to their pillows ; but, alas,
 Honeyless days and days did he let pass ;
 Until sweet Isabella's untouch'd cheek
 Fell sick within the rose's just domain,
 Fell thin as a young mother's, who doth
 seek
 By every lull to cool her infant's pain :
 "How ill she is," said he, "I may not
 speak,
 And yet I will, and tell my love all
 plain :
 If looks speak love-laws, I will drink
 her tears,
 And at the least 'twill startle off her
 cares."
 So said he one fair morning, and all day
 His heart beat awfully against his
 side ;
 And to his heart he inwardly did pray
 For power to speak ; but still the ruddy
 tide
 Stifled his voice, and puls'd resolve
 away—
 Fever'd his high conceit of such a
 bride,
 Yet brought him to the meekness of a
 child :
 Alas ! when passion is both meek and
 wild !
 So once more he had wak'd and an-
 guished
 A dreary night of love and misery,
 If Isabel's quick eye had not been wed
 To every symbol on his forehead high ;

She saw it waxing very pale and dead,
 And straight all flush'd; so, lisped
 tenderly,
 "Lorenzo!"—here she ceas'd her timid
 quest,
 But in her tone and look he read the rest.

"O Isabella, I can half perceive
 That I may speak my grief into thine
 ear;
 If thou didst ever anything believe,
 Believe how I love thee, believe how
 near
 My soul is to its doom: I would not
 grieve
 Thy hand by unwelcome pressing,
 would not fear
 Thine eyes by gazing; but I cannot
 live
 Another night, and not my passion
 shrive.

"Love! thou art leading me from wintry
 cold,
 Lady! thou ledest me to summer
 clime,
 And I must taste the blossoms that
 unfold
 In its ripe warmth this gracious
 morning time."
 So said, his erewhile timid lips grew
 bold,
 And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme:
 Great bliss was with them, and great
 happiness
 Grew, like a lusty flower in June's
 caress.

Parting they seem'd to tread upon the
 air,
 Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart
 Only to meet again more close, and share
 The inward fragrance of each other's
 heart.
 She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair
 Sang, of delicious love and honey'd
 dart;
 He with light steps went up a western
 hill,
 And bade the sun farewell, and joy'd
 his fill.

All close they met again, before the dusk
 Had taken from the stars its pleasant
 veil,
 All close they met, all eves, before the
 dusk
 Had taken from the stars its pleasant
 veil,

Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,
 Unknown of any, free from whisper-
 ing tale.

Ah! better had it been for ever so,
 Than idle ears should pleasure in their
 woe.

Were they unhappy then?—It cannot
 be—
 Too many tears for lovers have been
 shed,
 Too many sighs give we to them in fee,
 Too much of pity after they are dead,
 Too many doleful stories do we see,
 Whose matter in bright gold were best
 be read;
 Except in such a page where Theseus'
 spouse
 Over the pathless waves towards him
 bows.

But, for the general award of love,
 The little sweet doth kill much bitter-
 ness;
 Though Dido silent is in under-grove,
 And Isabella's was a great distress,
 Though young Lorenzo in warm Indian
 clove
 Was not embalm'd, this truth is not
 the less—
 Even bees; the little almsmen of spring-
 bowers,
 Know there is richest juice in poison-
 flowers.

With her two brothers this fair lady
 dwelt,
 Enriched from ancestral merchandise,
 And for them many a weary hand did
 swelt
 In torched mines and noisy factories,
 And many once proud-quiver'd loins did
 melt
 In blood from stinging whip;—with
 hollow eyes
 Many all day in dazzling river stood,
 To take the rich-ored driftings of the
 flood.

For them the Ceylon diver held his
 breath,
 And went all naked to the hungry
 shark;
 For them his ears gush'd blood; for
 them in death
 The seal on the cold ice with piteous
 bark
 Lay full of darts; for them alone did
 seethe

A thousand men in troubles wide and dark :

Half-ignorant, they turn'd an easy wheel,

That set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.

Why were they proud? Because their marble founts

Gush'd with more pride than do a wretch's tears?—

Why were they proud? Because fair orange-mounts

Were of more soft ascent than lazar stairs?—

Why were they proud? Because red-lin'd accounts

Were richer than the songs of Grecian years?—

Why were they proud? again we ask aloud,

Why in the name of Glory were they proud?

Yet were these Florentines as self-retired

In hungry pride and gainful cowardice, As two close Hebrews in that land inspired,

Paled in and vineyarded from beggar-spies;

The hawks of ship-mast forests—the untired

And pannier'd mules for ducats and old lies—

Quick cat's-paws on the generous stray-away,—

Great wits in Spanish, Tuscan, and Malay.

How was it these same ledger-men could spy

Fair Isabella in her downy nest?

How could they find out in Lorenzo's eye A straying from his toil? Hot Egypt's pest

Into their vision covetous and sly!

How could these money-bags see east and west?—

Yet so they did—and every dealer fair Must see behind, as doth the hunted hare.

O eloquent and famed Boccaccio!

Of thee we now should ask forgiving boon,

And of thy spicy myrtles as they blow, And of thy roses amorous of the moon,

And of thy lilies, that do paler grow Now they can no more hear thy ghitt-tern's tune,

For venturing syllables that ill beseem The quiet glooms of such a piteous theme.

Grant thou a pardon here, and then the tale

Shall move on soberly, as it is meet; There is no other crime, no mad assail

To make old prose in modern rhyme more sweet:

But it is done—succeed the verse or fail—

To honor thee, and thy gone spirit greet;

To stead thee as a verse in English tongue,

An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.

These brethren having found by many signs

What love Lorenzo for their sister had, And how she lov'd him too, each uncon-fines

His bitter thoughts to other, well-nigh mad

That he, the servant of their trade designs,

Should in their sister's love be blithe and glad

When 'twas their plan to coax her by degrees

To some high noble and his olive-trees.

And many a jealous conference had they,

And many times they bit their lips alone,

Before they fix'd upon a surest way To make the youngster for his crime atone;

And at the last, these men of cruel clay Cut Mercy with a sharp knife to the bone;

For they resolv'd in some forest dim To kill Lorenzo, and there bury him.

So on a pleasant morning, as he leant Into the sun-rise, o'er the balustrade Of the garden-terrace, towards him they bent

Their footing through the dews; and to him said,

"You seem there in the quiet of content,

Lorenzo, and we are most loth to invade

Calm speculation; but if you are wise, Bestride your steed while cold is in the skies.

"To-day we purpose, ay, this hour we
mount

To spur three leagues towards the
Apennine;
Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot
sun count

His dewy rosary on the eglantine."
Lorenzo, courteously as he was wont,
Bow'd a fair greeting to these ser-
pents' whine;
And went in haste, to get in readiness,
With belt, and spur, and bracing hunts-
man's dress.

And as he to the court-yard pass'd along,
Each third step did he pause, and
listen'd oft

If he could hear his lady's matin-song,
Or the light whisper of her footstep
soft;

And as he thus over his passion hung,
He heard a laugh full musical aloft;
When, looking up, he saw her features
bright
Smile through an in-door lattice; all
delight.

"Love, Isabel!" said he, "I was in pain
Lest I should miss to bid thee a good
morrow:

Ah! what if I should lose thee, when
so fain

I am to stifle all the heavy sorrow
Of a poor three hours' absence? but
we'll gain

Out of the amorous dark what day
doth borrow.

Good bye! I'll soon be back."—"Good
bye!" said she:—

And as he went she chanted merrily.

So the two brothers and their murder'd
man

Rode past fair Florence, to where
Arno's stream
Gurgles through straiten'd banks, and
still doth fan

Itself with dancing bulrush, and the
bream

Keeps head against the freshets. Sick
and wau

The brothers' faces in the ford did
seem,

Lorenzo's flush with love.—They pass'd
the water

Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

There was Lorenzo slain and buried in,
There in that forest did his great love
cease:

Ah! when a soul doth thus its freedom
win,

It aches in loneliness—is ill at peace
As the break-covert blood-hounds of
such sin:

They dipp'd their swords in the water,
and did tease

Their horses homeward, with convulsed
spur,

Each richer by his being a murderer.

They told their sister how, with sudden
speed,

Lorenzo had ta'en ship for foreign
lands,

Because of some great urgency and need
In their affairs, requiring trusty hands.

Poor Girl! put on thy stifling widow's
weed,

And 'scape at once from Hope's ac-
cursed bands;

To-day thou wilt not see him, nor to-
morrow,

And the next day will be a day of sorrow.

She weeps alone for pleasures not to be;
Sorely she wept until the night came
on,

And then, instead of love, O misery!
She brooded o'er the luxury alone:

His image in the dusk she seem'd to see,
And to the silence made a gentle moan,

Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,
And on her couch low murmuring,

"Where? O where?"

But Selfishness, Love's cousin, held not
long

Its fiery vigil in her single breast;
She fretted for the golden hour, and hung

Upon the time with feverish unrest—
Not long—for soon into her heart a

throng
Of higher occupants, a richer zest,

Came tragic; passion not to be subdued,
And sorrow for her love in travels rude.

In the mid days of autumn, on their eves
The breath of Winter comes from far
away,

And the sick west continually bereaves
Of some gold tinge, and plays a round-

elay
Of death among the bushes and the
leaves

To make all bare before he cares to
stray

From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel
By gradual decay from beauty fell,

Because Lorenzo came not. Oftentimes
 She ask'd her brothers, with an eye all
 pale,
 Striving to be itself, what dungeon
 climes
 Could keep him off so long? They
 spake a tale,
 Time after time, to quiet her. Their
 crimes
 Came on them, like a smoke from
 Hinnom's vale;
 And every night in dreams they groan'd
 aloud,
 To see their sister in her snowy shroud.
 And she had died in drowsy ignorance,
 But for a thing more deadly dark than
 all;
 It came like a fierce potion, drunk by
 chance,
 Which saves a sick man from the
 feather'd pall
 For some few gasping moments; like a
 lance,
 Waking an Indian from his cloudy
 hall
 With cruel pierce, and bringing him
 again
 Sense of the gnawing fire at heart and
 brain.
 It was a vision.—In the drowsy gloom,
 The dull of midnight, at her couch's
 foot
 Lorenzo stood, and wept: the forest
 tomb
 Had marr'd his glossy hair which once
 could shoot
 Lustre into the sun, and put cold doom
 Upon his lips, and taken the soft lute
 From his lorn voice, and past his loamed
 ears
 Had made a miry channel for his tears.
 Strange sound it was, when the pale
 shadow spake;
 For there was striving, in its piteous
 tongue,
 To speak as when on earth it was awake,
 And Isabella on its music hung:
 Languor there was in it, and tremulous
 shake,
 As in a palsied Druid's harp unstrung;
 And through it moan'd a ghostly under-
 song,
 Like hoarse night-gusts sepulchral briars
 among.
 Its eyes, though wild, were still all dewy
 bright

With love, and kept all phantom fear
 aloof
 From the poor girl by magic of their
 light,
 The while it did unthread the horrid
 woof
 Of the late darken'd time,—the murder-
 ous spite
 Of pride and avarice, the dark pine
 roof
 In the forest,—and the sodden turfed
 dell,
 Where, without any word, from stabs
 he fell.
 Saying moreover, "Isabel, my sweet!
 Red whortle-berries droop above my
 head,
 And a large flint-stone weighs upon my
 feet;
 Around me beeches and high chest-
 nuts shed
 Their leaves and prickly nuts; a sheep-
 fold bleat
 Comes from beyond the river to my
 bed:
 Go, shed one tear upon my heather-
 bloom,
 And it shall comfort me within the
 tomb.
 "I am a shadow now, alas! alas!
 Upon the skirts of human-nature
 dwelling
 Alone: I chant alone the holy mass,
 While little sounds of life are round
 me knelling,
 And glossy bees at noon do fieldward
 pass,
 And many a chapel bell the hour is
 telling,
 Paining me through: those sounds
 grow strange to me,
 And thou art distant in Humanity.
 "I know what was, I feel full well what
 is,
 And I should rage, if spirits could go
 mad;
 Though I forget the taste of earthly
 bliss,
 That paleness warms my grave, as
 though I had
 A Seraph chosen from the bright abyss
 To be my spouse: thy paleness makes
 me glad;
 Thy beauty grows upon me, and I feel
 A greater love through all my essence
 steal."

The Spirit mourn'd "Adieu!"—dis-
solv'd, and left

The atom darkness in a slow turmoil;
As when of healthful midnight sleep
bereft,

Thinking on rugged hours and fruit-
less toil,

We put our eyes into a pillow cleft,
And see the spangly gloom froth up
and boil:

It made sad Isabella's eyelids ache,
And in the dawn she started up awake;

"Ha! ha!" said she, "I knew not this
hard life,

I thought the worst was simple
misery;

I thought some Fate with pleasure or
with strife

Portion'd us—happy days, or else to
die;

But there is crime—a brother's bloody
knife!

Sweet Spirit, thou hast school'd my
infancy:

I'll visit thee for this, and kiss thine
eyes,

And greet thee morn and even in the
skies."

When the full morning came, she had
devised

How she might secret to the forest hie;
How she might find the clay, so dearly
prized,

And sing to it one latest lullaby;
How her short absence might be un-
surmised,

While she the inmost of the dream
would try.

Resolv'd, she took with her an aged nurse,
And went into that dismal forest-hearse.

See, as they creep along the riverside,
How she doth whisper to that aged

Dame,
And, after looking round the champaign
wide,

Shows her a knife.—"What feverous
hectic flame

Burns in thee, child?—What good can
thee betide,

That thou should'st smile again?"—

The evening came,

And they had found Lorenzo's earthy bed;
The flint was there, the berries at his
head.

Who hath not loiter'd in a green church-
yard,

And let his spirit, like a demon-mole,
Work through the clayey soil and
gravel hard,

To see skull, coffin'd bones, and
funeral stole;

Pitying each form that hungry Death
hath marr'd,

And filling it once more with human
soul?

Ah! this is holiday to what was felt
When Isabella by Lorenzo knelt.

She gaz'd into the fresh-thrown mould,
as though

One glance did fully all its secrets tell;
Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know
Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well;
Upon the murderous spot she seem'd to
grow,

Like to a native lily of the dell:
Then with her knife, all sudden, she began
To dig more fervently than misers can.

Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon
Hersilk had play'd in purple phantasies,
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than
stone,

And put it in her bosom, where it dries
And freezes utterly unto the bone
Those dainties made to still an infant's
cries:

Then 'gan she work again; nor stay'd
her care,

But to throw back at times her veiling
hair.

That old nurse stood beside her wondering
Until her heart felt pity to the core
At sight of such a dismal laboring,

And so she kneel'd, with her locks
all hoar,

And put her lean hands to the horrid
thing:

Three hours they labor'd at this travail
sore;

At last they felt the kernel of the grave,
And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

Ah! wherefore all this wormy circum-
stance?

Why linger at the yawning tomb so
long?

O for the gentleness of old Romance,
The simple plainning of a minstrel's
song!

Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,
For here, in truth, it doth not well
belong

To speak:—O turn thee to the very tale,
And taste the music of that vision pale.

With duller steel than the Perséan sword
They cut away no formless monster's
head,

But one, whose gentleness did well accord
With death, as life. The ancient
harps have said,

Love never dies, but lives, immortal
Lord :

If Love impersonate was ever dead,
Pale Isabella kiss'd it, and low moan'd
'Twas love ; cold,—dead indeed, but not
dethroned.

In anxious secrecy they took it home,
And then the prize was all for Isabel :
She calm'd its wild hair with a golden
comb,

And all around each eye's sepulchral
cell

Pointed each fringed lash ; the smeared
loam

With tears, as chill as a dripping well,
She drench'd away :—and still she
comb'd, and kept
Sighing all day—and still she kiss'd, and
wept.

Then in a silken scarf, sweet with the
dews

Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,
And divine liquids come with odorous
ooze

Through the cold serpent pipe refresh-
fully,—

She wrapp'd it up ; and for its tomb did
choose

A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by
And cover'd it with mould and, o'er it set
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever
wet.

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and
sun,

And she forgot the blue above the trees,
And she forgot the dells where waters
run,

And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze ;
She had no knowledge when the day
was done,

And the new morn she saw not : but
in peace

Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core.

And so she ever fed it with thin tears,
Whence thick, and green, and beauti-
ful it grew,

So that it smelt more balmy than its peers
Of Basil-tufts in Florence ; for it drew

Nurture besides, and life, from human
fears,

From the fast mouldering head there
shut from view :

So that the jewel, safely casketed,
Came forth, and in perfum'd leaflets
spread.

O Melancholy, linger here awhile !

O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !

O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,

Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh !

Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and
smile ;

Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits,
heavily,

And make a pale light in your cypress
glooms, {tombs.

Tinting with silver wan your marble

Moan hither, all ye syllables of woe,

From the deep throat of sad Mel-
pomene !

Through bronzed lyre in tragic order go,

And touch the strings into a mystery ;

Sound mournfully upon the winds and
low ;

For simple Isabel is soon to be
Among the dead : She withers, like a
palm

Cut by an Indian for its juicy balm.

O leave the palm to wither by itself ;

Let not quick Winter chill its dying
hour !—

It may not be—those Baalites of pelf,

Her brethren, noted the continual
shower

From her dead eyes ; and many a curious
elf,

Among her kindred, wonder'd that
such dower

Of youth and beauty should be thrown
aside

By one mark'd out to be a Noble's bride.

And, furthermore, her brethren won-
der'd much

Why she sat drooping by the Basil
green,

And why it flourish'd, as by magic touch ;

Greatly they wonder'd what the thing
might mean

They could not surely give belief, that
such

A very nothing would have power to
wean

Her from her own fair youth, and
pleasures gay, {lay.

And even remembrance of her love's de-

Therefore they watch'd a time when they
might sift

This hidden whim ; and long they
watch'd in vain ;

For seldom did she go to chapel-shrift,
And seldom felt she any hunger-pain ;

And when she left, she hurried back, as
swift

As bird on wing to breast its eggs
again ;

And, patient as a hen-bird, sat her there
Beside her Basil, weeping through her
hair.

Yet they contriv'd to steal the Basil-pot,
And to examine it in secret place :

The thing was vile with green and livid
spot,

And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's face ;
The guerdon of their murder they had
got,

And so left Florence in a moment's
space,

Never to turn again.—Away they went,
With blood upon their heads, to banish-
ment.

O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away !

O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !

O Echo, Echo, on some other day,
From isles Lethæan, sigh to us—O sigh !
Spirits of grief, sing not your " Well-a-
way ! "

For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die :

Will die a death too lone and incomplete,
Now they have ta'en away her Basil
sweet.

Piteous she look'd on dead and senseless
things,

Asking for her lost Basil amorously :

And with melodious chuckle in the
strings

Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes
would cry

After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,

To ask him where her Basil was ; and
why

'Twas hid from her : " For cruel 'tis,"
said she,

" To steal my Basil-pot away from me."

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,
Imploping for her Basil to the last.

No heart was there in Florence but did
mourn

In pity of her love, so overcast.

And a sad ditty of this story born

From mouth to mouth through all the
country pass'd :

Still is the burthen sung—" O cruelty,
" To steal my Basil-pot away from
me ! " 1818. 1820.

THE EVE OF ST. AGNES

ST. AGNES' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was !
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold ;
The hare limp'd trembling through the
frozen grass,

And silent was the flock in woolly fold :
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers,
while he told

His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, with-
out a death,

Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while
his prayer he saith.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy
man

Then takes his lamp, and riseth from
his knees,

And back returneth, meagre, barefoot,
wan,

Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees :
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem
to freeze.

Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails :
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb ora-
tries,

He passeth by ; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy
hoods and mails.

Northward he turneth through a little
door,

And scarce three steps, ere Music's
golden tongue

Flatter'd to tears this aged man and
poor ;

But no—already had his deathbell rung ;
The joys of all his life were said and
sung :

His was harsh penance on St. Agnès'
Eve :

Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners'
sake to grieve.

That ancient Beadsman heard the pre-
lude soft ;

And so it chanc'd, for many a door was
wide,

From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets gan to
chide :

The level chambers, ready with their
[pride,

Were glowing to receive a thousand
guests :

The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,
Star'd where upon their heads the cor-
nice rests,

With hair blown back, and wings put
cross-wise on their breasts.

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting fairly
The brain, new stuff'd, in youth, with
triumphs gay

Of old romance. These let us wish
away,

And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady
there,

Whose heart had brooded, all that win-
try day,

On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly
care,

As she had heard old dames full many
times declare.

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of
delight,

And soft adorings from their loves re-
ceive

Upon the honey'd middle of the night
If ceremonies due they did aright ;

As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily
white ;

Nor look behind, nor sideways, but re-
quire

Of Heaven with upward eyes for all
that they desire.

Full of this whim was thoughtful
Madeline :

The music, yearning like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard : her maiden eyes
divine.

Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping
train

Pass by—she heeded not at all : in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
And back retir'd ; not cool'd by high
disdain,

But she saw not : her heart was other-
where :

She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweet-
est of the year.

She danc'd along with vague, regardless
eyes,

Anxious her lips, her breathing quick
and short :

The hallow'd hour was near at hand :
she sighs

Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd
resort

Of whisperers in anger, or in sport ;
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and
scorn,

Hoodwink'd with faery fancy ; all amorn,
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs un-
shorn,

And all the bliss to be before to-morrow
morn.

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She linger'd still. Meantime, across the
moors,

Had come young Porphyro, with heart
on fire

For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,
Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he,
and implores

All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all
unseen ;

Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in
sooth such things have been.

He ventures in : let no buzz'd whisper
tell :

All eyes be muffled, or a hundred
swords

Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous
citadel :

For him, those chambers held barbarian
hordes,

Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage : not one breast
affords

Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body
and in soul.

Ah, happy chance ! the aged creature
came,

Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where he stood, hid from the torch's
flame,

Behind a broad half-pillar, far beyond
The sound of merriment and chorus
bland :

He startled her ; but soon she knew his
face,

And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied
hand,

Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro ! hie thee
from this place ;

They are all here to-night, the whole
blood-thirsty race !

Get hence ! get hence ! there's dwarfish
 Hildebrand ;
 He had a fever late, and in the fit
 He cursed thee and thine, both house
 and land ;
 Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not
 a whit
 More tame for his gray hairs—Alas me !
 flit !
 Flit like a ghost away.”—“ Ah, Gossip
 dear,
 We're safe enough ; here in this arm-
 chair sit,
 And tell me how ”—“ Good Saints ! not
 here, not here ;
 “ Follow me, child, or else these stones
 will be thy bier.”

He follow'd through a lowly arched way,
 Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty
 plume ;
 And as she mutter'd “ Well-a—well-a-
 day ! ”
 He found him in a little moonlight
 room,
 Pale, lattic'd, chill, and silent as a tomb.
 “ Now tell me where is Madeline,”
 said he,
 “ O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom
 Which none but secret sisterhood may
 see,
 When thy St. Agnes' wool are weaving
 piously.”

“ St. Agnes ! Ah ! it is St. Agnes' Eve—
 Yet men will murder upon holy days :
 Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
 And be liege-lord of all the Elves and
 Fays,
 To venture so : it fills me with amaze
 To see thee, Porphyro !—St. Agnes' Eve !
 God's help ! my lady fair the conjurer
 plays
 This very night ; good angels her de-
 ceive !
 But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle
 time to grieve.”

Feebly she laugheth in the languid
 moon,
 While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
 Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone
 Who keepeth clos'd a wond'rous riddle-
 book,
 As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
 But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when
 she told
 His lady's purpose ; and he scarce could
 brook

Tears, at the thought of those enchant-
 ments cold,
 And Madeline asleep in lap of legends
 old.

Sudden a thought came like a full-
 blown rose,
 Flushing his brow, and in his pained
 heart
 Made purple riot : then doth he propose
 A stratagem, that makes the beldame
 start :
 “ A cruel man and impious thou art :
 Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and
 dream
 Alone with her good angels, far apart
 From wicked men like thee. Go, go !—
 I deem
 Thou canst not surely be the same that
 thou didst seem.

“ I will not harm her, by all saints I
 swear,”
 Quoth Porphyro : “ O may I ne'er find
 grace
 When my weak voice shall whisper its
 last prayer,
 If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
 Or look with ruffian passion in her face :
 Good Angela, believe me by these tears ;
 Or I will, even in a moment's space,
 Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's
 ears,
 And beard them, though they be more
 fang'd than wolves and bears.”

“ Ah ! why wilt thou affright a feeble
 soul ?
 A poor, weak, palsy-stricken church-
 yard thing,
 Whose passing-bell may ere the mid-
 night toll ;
 Whose prayers for thee, each morn and
 evening,
 Were never miss'd.” Thus plaining,
 doth she bring
 A gentler speech from burning Por-
 phyro ;
 So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,
 That Angela gives promise she will do
 Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal
 or woe.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
 Even to Madeline's chamber, and there
 hide
 Him in a closet, of such privacy
 That he might see her beauty unspied,
 And win perhaps that night a peerless
 bride,

While legion'd fairies pac'd the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.

Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame:

"All cates and dainties shall be stored there

Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour frame

Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,

For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
Wait here, my child, with patience;
kneel in prayer

The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,

Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd;

The dame return'd, and whisper'd in his ear

To follow her; with aged eyes aghast
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain

The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd, and chaste;

Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd amain.

His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St Agnes' charmed maid,

Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:
With silver taper's light, and pious care,
She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove
fay'd and fled.

Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine,
died:

She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,

Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale
should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled,
in her dell.

A casement high and triple arch'd there was,

All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass.

And diamonded with panes of quaint device,

Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;

And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,

And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,

A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,

And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,

As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;

Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,

And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven: Porphyro grew faint:

She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

Anon his heart revives: her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees;

Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one
Loosens her fragrant boddice; by degrees

Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees;

Half-hidden, like a mermaid in seaweed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,

In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,

In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay.

Until the popped warmth of sleep oppress'd

Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued
away;
Flown, like a thought, until the mor-
row-day;
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and
pain;
Clasp'd like a missal where swart
Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from
rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a
bud again.

Stol'n to this paradise, and so en-
tranced,
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,
And listen'd to her breathing, if it
chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
Which when he heard, that minute did
he bless,
And breath'd himself: then from the
closet crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
And over the hush'd carpet, silent,
stepped,
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where,
lo!—how fast she slept.

Then by the bed-side, where the faded
moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half-anguish'd, threw
thereon
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and
jet:—
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive cla-
rion,
The kettle-drum, and far-heard, cla-
rionet,
Affray his ears, though but in dying
tone:—
The hall door shuts again, and all the
noise is gone.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
In blanched linen, smooth, and laven-
der'd,
While he from forth the closet brought
a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and
gourd;
With jellies soother than the creamy
curd, [mon;
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinna-
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
From Fez; and spiced dainties, every
one, [banon.
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Le-

These delicacies he heap'd with glowing
hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they
stand
In the retired quiet of the night,
Filling the chilly room with perfume
light.—

“And now, my love, my seraph fair,
awake!
Thou art my heaven, and I thine
hermit:
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes'
sake,
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my
soul doth ache.”

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved
arm
Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her
dream
By the dusk curtains:—'twas a mid-
night charm
Impossible to melt as iced stream:
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight
gleam:
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:
It seem'd he never, never could redeem
From such a stedfast spell his lady's eyes;
So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed
phantasies.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—
Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tend-
erest be,
He play'd an ancient ditty, long since
mute,
In Provence call'd, “La belle dame sans
mercy:”
Close to her ear touching the melody;—
Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft
moan:
He ceased—she panted quick—and sud-
denly
Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone:
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-
sculptured stone.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:
There was a painful change, that night
expell'd
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with
many a sigh; [keep;
While still her gaze on Porphyro would
Who knelt, with joined hands and
piteous eye, [dreamingly.
Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now
Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:
How chang'd thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go."

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star
Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;
Into her dream he melted, as the rose
Blendeth its odor with the violet,—
Solution sweet: meantime the frost wind blows
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flawn-blown sleet:

"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"

'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:

"No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine,—

Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring?

I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;—

A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!

Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil dyed?

Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest

After so many hours of toil and quest,
A famish'd pilgrim,—saved by miracle.
Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest

Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

"Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,

Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed:
Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—
The bloated wassaillers will never heed:—

Let us away, my love, with happy speed:
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—
Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:

Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,

For there were sleeping dragons all around,

At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—

Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.—

In all the house was heard no human sound.

A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door;

The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,

Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;

Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they glide;

Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
With a huge empty flagon by his side:

The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,

But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—

The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;—

The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

And they are gone: ay, ages long ago
These lovers fled away into the storm.

That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,

And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form

Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-
worm,
Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the
old
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face
deform;
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
For aye unsought for slept among his
ashes cold.

January, 1819. 1820.

THE EVE OF SAINT MARK

A FRAGMENT

UPON a Sabbath-day it fell;
Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell,
That call'd the folks to evening prayer;
The city streets were clean and fair
From wholesome drench of April rains;
And, on the western window panes,
The chilly sunset faintly told
Of unmat'ur'd green valleys cold,
Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,
Of rivers new with spring-tide sedge,
Of primroses by shelter'd rills,
And daisies on the aguish hills.
Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell:
The silent streets were crowded well
With staid and pious companies,
Warm from their fire-side orat'ries;
And moving, with demurest air,
To even-song, and vesper prayer.
Each arched porch, and entry low,
Was fill'd with patient folk and slow,
With whispers hush, and shuffling feet,
While play'd the organ loud and sweet.

The bells had ceas'd, the prayers begun,
And Bertha had not yet half done
A curious volume, patch'd and torn,
That all day long, from earliest morn,
Had taken captive her two eyes,
Among its golden broideries;
Perplex'd her with a thousand things,—
The stars of Heaven, and angels' wings,
Martyrs in a fiery blaze,
Azure saints and silver rays,
Moses' breastplate, and the seven
Candlesticks John saw in Heaven,
The winged Lion of St. Mark,
And the Covenantal Ark,
With its many mysteries,
Cherubim and golden mice.

Bertha was a maiden fair,
Dwelling in th' old Minster-square;
From her fire-side she could see,
Sidelong, its rich antionity.

Far as the Bishop's garden-wall;
Where sycamores and elm-trees tall,
Full-leav'd, the forest had outstript,
By no sharp north-wind ever nipt,
So shelter'd by the mighty pile.
Bertha arose, and read awhile,
With forehead 'gainst the window-pane
Again she try'd, and then again,
Until the dusk eve left her dark
Upon the legend of St. Mark.
From plated lawn-frill, fine and thin,
She lifted up her soft warm chin.
With aching neck and swimming eyes,
And daz'd with saintly imageries.

All was gloom, and silent all,
Save now and then the still foot-fall
Of one returning homewards late,
Past the echoing minster-gate.
The clamorous daws, that all the day
Above tree-tops and towers play,
Pair by pair had gone to rest,
Each in its ancient belfry nest,
Where asleep they fall betimes,
To music and the drowsy chimes.

All was silent, all was gloom,
Abroad and in the homely room:
Down she sat, poor cheated soul;
And struck a lamp from the dismal coal;
Lean'd forward, with bright drooping
hair

And slant look, full against the glare.
Her shadow, in uneasy guise,
Hover'd about, a giant size,
On ceiling-beam and old oak chair,
The parrot's cage, and panelsquare;
And the warm angled winter-screen,
On which were many monsters seen,
Call'd doves of Siam, Lima mice,
And legless birds of Paradise,
Macaw, and tender Avadavat,
And silken-furr'd Angora cat.
Untir'd she read, her shadow still
Glower'd about, as it would fill
The room with wildest forms and shades,
As though some ghostly queen of spades
Had come to mock behind her back,
And dance, and ruffle her garments
black.

Untir'd she read the legend page,
Of holy Mark, from youth to age,
On land, on sea, in pagan chains,
Rejoicing for his many pains.
Sometimes the learned eremite,
With golden star, or dagger bright,
Referr'd to pious poesies
Written in smallest crow-quill size
Beneath the text: and thus the rhyme

Was parcel'd out from time to time :
 —“ Als writeth he of swevens,
 Men han before they wake in bliss,
 Whanne that hir friendes thinke him
 bound
 In crimped shroude farre under grounde :
 And how a litling childe mote be
 A scut er its nativitie,
 Gif that the modre (God her blesse !)
 Kepen in solitarinesse,
 And kissen devout the holy croce.
 Of Goddes love, and Sathan's force,—
 He writith ; and thinges many mo
 Of swiche thinges I may not show.
 Bot I must tellen verilie
 Somdel of Sainte Cicilie,
 And chiefly what he auctorethe
 Of Sainte Markis life and dethe : ”

At length her constant eyelids come
 Upon the fervent martyrdom ;
 Then lastly to his holy shrine,
 Exalt amid the tapers' shine
 At Venice,—

January and September, 1819. 1848.

ODE ON INDOLENCE

“ They toil not, neither do they spin.”

ONE morn before me were three figures
 seen,

With bowéd necks, and joinéd hands,
 side-faced ;

And one behind the other stepp'd serene,
 In placid sandals, and in white robes
 graced ;

They pass'd, like figures on a marble urn,
 When shifted round to see the other
 side ;

They came again ; as when the urn
 once more

Is shifted round, the first seen shades
 return ;

And they were strange to me, as may
 betide

With vases, to one deep in Phidian
 lore.

How is it. Shadows ! that I knew ye not ?
 How came ye muffled in so hush a
 mask ?

Was it a silent deep-disguised plot
 To steal away, and leave without a
 task

My idle days ? Ripe was the drowsy
 hour ;

The blissful cloud of summer-indo-
 lence

Benumbed my eyes ; my pulse grew
 less and less ;
 Pain had no sting, and pleasure's wreath
 no flower :

O why did ye not melt, and leave my
 sense

Unhaunted quite of all but—noth-
 ingness ?

A third time passed they by, and, pass-
 ing, turn'd

Each one the face a moment whiles to
 me ;

Then faded, and to follow them I burn'd
 And ach'd for wings, because I knew
 the three ;

The first was a fair Maid, and Love her
 name ;

The second was Ambition, pale of
 cheek,

And ever watchful with fatigued
 eye ;

The last, whom I love more, the more of
 blame

Is heap'd upon her, maiden most un-
 meek,—

I knew to be my demon Poesy.

They faded, and forsooth ! I wanted
 wings :

O folly ! What is Love ? and where is
 it ?

And for that poor Ambition ! it springs
 From a man's little heart's short fever-
 fit ;

For Poesy !—no,—she has not a joy,—
 At least for me,—so sweet as drowsy

noons,
 And evenings steep'd in honied in-
 dolence ;

O, for an age so sheltered from annoy,
 That I may never know how change

the moons,
 Or hear the voice of busy common-
 sense !

And once more came they by ;—alas !
 wherefore ?

My sleep had been embroider'd with
 dim dreams ;

My soul had been a lawn besprinkled
 o'er

With flowers, and stirring shades, and
 baffled beams : [fell,

The morn was clouded, but no shower
 Tho' in her lids hung the sweet tears

of May ;

The open casement press'd a new-
 leav'd vine,

Let in the budding warmth and throstle's lay;
 O Shadows! 'twas a time to bid farewell!
 Upon your skirts had fallen no tears of mine.

So, ye three Ghosts, adieu! Ye cannot raise
 My head cool-bedded in the flowery grass;

For I would not be dieted with praise,
 A pet-lamb in a sentimental farce!
 Fade softly from my eyes, and be once more

In masque-like Figures on the dreamy urn;
 Farewell! I yet have visions for the night,
 And for the day faint visions there is store:

Vanish, ye Phantoms! from my idle spright,
 Into the clouds, and never more return!
March, 1819. 1848.

W

ODE

BARDS of Passion and of Mirth,
 Ye have left your souls on earth!
 Have ye souls in heaven too,
 Double-lived in regions new?
 Yes, and those of heaven commune
 With the spheres of sun and moon;
 With the noise of fountains wondrous,
 And the patle of voices thund'rous;
 With the whisper of heaven's trees
 And one another, in soft ease
 Seated on Elysian lawns
 Brows'd by none but Dian's fawns;
 Underneath large blue-bells tented,
 Where the daisies are rose-scented,
 And the rose herself has got
 Perfume which on earth is not;
 Where the nightingale doth sing
 Not a senseless, tranced thing,
 But divine melodious truth;
 Philosophic numbers smooth;
 Tales and golden histories
 Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then
 On the earth ye live again;
 And the souls ye left behind you
 Teach us, here, the way to find you,
 Where your other souls are joying,
 Never slumber'd, never cloying.
 Here, your earth-born souls still speak
 To mortals, of their little week;

Of their sorrows and delights;
 Of their passions and their spites;
 Of their glory and their shame;
 What doth strengthen and what maim.
 Thus ye teach us, every day,
 Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,
 Ye have left your souls on earth!
 Ye have souls in heaven too,
 Double-lived in regions new!

1819. 1820.

ODE TO PSYCHE

O GODDESS! hear these tuneless numbers, wrung

By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,

And pardon that thy secrets should be sung

Even into thine own soft-conched ear;
 Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see
 The winged Psyche with awaken'd eyes?

I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,
 And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,

Saw two fair creatures, couched side by side
 In deepest grass, beneath the whispering roof

Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there ran

A brooklet, scarce espied:
 'Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-eyed,

Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,
 They lay calm-breathing on the bedded grass;

Their arms embracéd, and their pinions too;

Their lips touch'd not, but had not bade adieu,

As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber,
 And ready still past kisses to outnumber
 At tender eye-dawn of aurorean love:

The winged boy I knew;
 But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove?

His Psyche true!

O latest born and loveliest vision far
 Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy!
 Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-region'd star,

Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the fairer than these, though temple thou hast none,

Nor altar heap'd with flowers;

Nor virgin-choir to make delicious moan
 Upon the midnight hours ;
 No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense
 ■ sweet
 From chain-swung censer teeming ;
 No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat
 Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

O brightest ! though too late for antique
 vows,
 Too, too late for the fond believing
 lyre,
 When holy were the haunted forest
 boughs,
 Holy the air, the water, and the fire ;
 Yet even in these days so far retir'd
 From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,
 Fluttering among the faint Olymp-
 ians,
 I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.
 So let me be thy choir, and make a moan
 Upon the midnight hours ;
 Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy in-
 cense sweet
 From swung censer teeming ;
 Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy
 heat
 Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane
 In some untrodden region of my mind,
 Where branched thoughts, new grown
 with pleasant pain,
 Instead of pines shall murmur in the
 wind :
 Far, far around shall those dark-cluster'd
 trees
 Fledge the wild-ridged mountains
 steep by steep ;
 And there by zephyrs, streams, and
 birds, and bees,
 The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to
 sleep ;
 And in the midst of this wide quietness
 A rosy sanctuary will I dress
 With the wreath'd trellis of a working
 brain,
 With buds, and bells, and stars with-
 out a name,
 With all the gardener Fancy e'er could
 feign,
 Who breeding flowers, will never breed
 the same : [light
 And there shall be for thee all soft de-
 That shadowy thought can win,
 A bright torch, and a casement ope at
 night,
 To let the warm Love in !

April, 1819. 1820.

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness,
 Thou foster-child of silence and slow
 time,
 Sylvan historian, who canst thus ex-
 press
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our
 rhyme ;
 What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about
 thy shape
 Of deities or mortals, or of both,
 In Tempe or the dales of Arcady ?
 What men or gods are these ? What
 maidens loth ?
 What mad pursuit ? What struggle to
 escape ?
 What pipes and timbrels ? What
 wild ecstasy ?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those un-
 heard
 Are sweeter ; therefore, ye soft pipes,
 play on ;
 Not to the sensual ear, but, more en-
 dear'd,
 Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone :
 Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou
 canst not leave
 Thy song, nor ever can those trees be
 bare ;
 Bold Lover, never, never canst thou
 kiss
 Though winning near the goal—yet, do
 not grieve ;
 She cannot fade, though thou hast not
 thy bliss,
 For ever wilt thou love, and she be
 fair !

Ah, happy, happy boughs ! that cannot
 shed
 Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring
 adieu ;
 And, happy melodist, unwearied,
 For ever piping songs for ever new ;
 More happy love ! more happy, happy
 love !
 For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
 For ever panting, and for ever
 young ;
 All breathing human passion far above,
 That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and
 cloy'd,
 A burning forehead, and a parching
 tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice ?
 To what green altar, O mysterious
 priest,

Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the
skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands
dressed?

What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful cit-
adel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious
morn?

And, little town, thy streets for ever-
more

Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er re-
turn.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with
brede

Of marble men and maidens over
wrought,

With forest branches and the trodden
weed;

Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of
thought

As doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!

When old age shall this generation
waste,

Thou shalt remain, in midst of other
woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom
thou say'st,

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—
that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need
to know.

1819. January, 1820.

W ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numb-
ness pains

My sense, as though of hemlock I had
drunk,

Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards

had sunk;

'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happi-
ness,—

That thou, light winged Dryad of
the trees,

In some melodious plot

Of beechen green, and shadows
numberless,

Singest of summer in full-throated
ease.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath
been

Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved

Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-
burnt mirth!

O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippo-
crene,

With beaded bubbles winking at the
brim,

And purple-stained mouth;

That I might drink, and leave the
world unseen,

And with thee fade away into the
forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast
never known,

The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each
other groan;

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray
hairs,

Where youth grows pale, and spectre-
thin, and dies;

Where but to think is to be full of
sorrow

And leaden-eyed despairs,

Where Beauty cannot keep her
lustrous eyes,

Or new Love pine at them beyond
to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his
pards,

But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and
retards;

Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her
throne,

Cluster'd around by all her starry
Fays;

But here there is no light,

Save what from heaven is with the
breezes blown

Through verdurous glooms and
winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my
feet,

Nor what soft incense hangs upon the
boughs,

But, in embalmed darkness, guess each
sweet

Wherewith the seasonable month
endows

The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree
wild;

White hawthorn, and the pastoral
eglantine ;
Fast fading violets cover'd up in
leaves ;

And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy
wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on
summer eves.

Darkling I listen ; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful
Death,

Call'd him soft names in many a mused
rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath ;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no
pain,

While thou art pouring forth thy
soul abroad

In such an ecstasy !
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have
ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal
Bird !

No hungry generations tread thee
down ;

The voice I hear this passing night was
heard

In ancient days by emperor and clown :
Perhaps the self-same song that found a
path

Through the sad heart of Ruth, when,
sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien
corn ;

The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening
on the foam

Of perilous seas, in faery lands for-
lorn.

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole
self !

Adieu ! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.

Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem
fades

Past the near meadows, over the still
stream, [deep

Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried
In the next valley-glades :

Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?
Fled is that music :—Do I wake or
sleep? *May, 1819. July, 1819.*

ODE ON MELANCHOLY

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poi-
sonous wine ;

Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proser-
pine ;

Make not your rosary of yew-berries,
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth
be

Your mournful Psyche, nor the
downy owl

A partner in your sorrow's mysteries ;
For shade to shade will come too
drowsily,

And drown the wakeful anguish of
the soul.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a weeping
cloud,

That fosters the droop-headed flowers
all,

And hides the green hill in an April
shroud ;

Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,
Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-
wave,

Or on the wealth of globed peonies ;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
Emprison her soft hand, and let her
rave,

And feed deep, deep upon her peer-
less eyes.

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that
must die ;

And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
Bidding adieu ; and aching Pleasure nigh,
Turning to poison while the bee-
mouth sips :

Ay, in the very temple of Delight
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran
shrine,

Though seen of none save him whose
strenuous tongue

Can burst Joy's grape against his palate
fine :

His soul shall taste the sadness of her
might,

And be among her cloudy trophies
hung. *1819. 1820.*

√ TO AUTUMN

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing
sun ;

Conspiring with him, how to load and
bless

With fruit the vines that round the
thatch-eves run ;

To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-
trees,

And fill all fruit with ripeness to the
core ;

To swell the gourd, and plump the
hazel shells

With a sweet kernel ; to set budding
more,

And still more, later flowers for the
bees,

Until they think warm days will never
cease,

For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their
clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy
store ?

Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may
find

Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing
wind ;

Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies,
while thy hook

Spare the next swath and all its
twined flowers :

And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost
keep

Steady thy laden head across a brook ;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,

Thou watchest the last oozy hours
by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay,
where are they ?

Think not of them, thou hast thy mu-
sic too,—

While barred clouds bloom the soft-
dying day,

And touch the stubble-plains with
rosy hue ;

Then in a wailful choir the small gnats
mourn

Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or
dies ;

And full-grown lambs loud bleat from
hilly bourn ;

Hedge-cricket sing ; and now with
treble soft [croft ;

The red-breast whistles from a garden-
And gathering swallows twitter in
the skies.

September 1819. 1820.

HYPERION

A FRAGMENT

BOOK I,

DEEP in the shady sadness of a vale
Far sunken from the healthy breath of
morn,

Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one
star,

Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,
Still as the silence round about his lair ;

Forest on forest hung about his head
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was
there,

Not so much life as on a summer's day
Robs not one light seed from the
feather'd grass,

But where the dead leaf fell, there did
it rest.

A stream went voiceless by, still dead-
ened more

By reason of his fallen divinity
Spreading a shade : the Naiad 'mid her
reeds

Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-
marks went,

No further than to where his feet had
stray'd,

And slept there since. Upon the sodden
ground

His old right hand lay nerveless, listless,
dead,

Unseptr'd ; and his realmless eyes
were closed ;

While his bow'd head seem'd list'ning
to the Earth,

His ancient mother, for some comfort
yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him
from his place ;

But there came one, who with a kindred
hand

Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bend-
ing low

With reverence, though to one who knew
it not.

She was a Goddess of the infant world ;
By her in stature the tall Amazon

Had stood a pigmy's height : she would
have ta'en

Achilles by the hair and bent his neck ;
Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel.

Her face was large as that of Memphian
sphinx,

Pedestal'd haply in a palace court,

When sages look'd to Egypt for their lore.

But oh! how unlike marble was that face:

How beautiful, if sorrow had not made Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.

There was a listening fear in her regard, As if calamity had but begun:

As if the vanward clouds of evil days Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear

Was with its stored thunder laboring up. One hand she press'd upon that aching spot

Where beats the human heart, as if just there,

Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain; The other upon Saturn's bended neck

She laid, and to the level of his ear Leaning with parted lips, some words she spake

In solemn tenor and deep organ tone: Some mourning words, which in our feeble tongue

Would come in these like accents; O how frail

To that large utterance of the early Gods!

"Saturn, look up!—though wherefore, poor old King?

I have no comfort for thee, no not one: I cannot say, 'O wherefore sleepest thou?' [earth

For heaven is parted from thee, and the Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God;

And ocean too, with all its solemn noise, Has from thy sceptre pass'd; and all the air

Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.

Thy thunder, conscious of the new command,

Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house: And thy sharp lightning in unpractised hands

Scorches and burns our once serene domain.

O aching time! O moments big as years! All as ye pass swell out the monstrous truth,

And press it so upon our weary griefs That unbelief has not a space to breathe. Saturn, sleep on:—O thoughtless, why did I

Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude?

Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes?

Saturn, sleep on! while at thy feet I weep."

As when, upon a tranced summer-night,

Those green-rob'd senators of mighty woods,

Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,

Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,

Save from one gradual solitary gust Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,

As if the ebbing air had but one wave; So came these words and went; the while in tears

She touch'd her fair large forehead to the ground,

Just where her falling hair might be outspread

A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet. One moon, with alteration slow, had shed

Her silver seasons four upon the night, And still these two were postured motionless,

Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern;

The frozen God still couchant on the earth,

And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet: Until at length old Saturn lifted up

His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone,

And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,

And that fair kneeling Goddess; and then spake,

As with a palsied tongue, and while his beard

Shook horrid with such aspen-malady: "O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,

Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face; Look up, and let me see our doom in it;

Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape Is Saturn's; tell me, if thou hear'st the voice

Of Saturn; tell me, if this wrinkling brow,

Naked and bare of its great diadem, Peers like the front of Saturn. Who

had power

To make me desolate? whence came the strength?

How was it nurtur'd to such bursting forth,

While Fate seem'd strangled in my nervous grasp?

But it is so; and I am smother'd up, And buried from all godlike exercise

Of influence benign on planets pale,

Of admonitions to the winds and seas,
 Of peaceful sway above man's harvest-
 ing,
 And all those acts which Deity supreme
 Doth ease its heart of love in.—I am gone
 Away from my own bosom : I have left
 My strong identity, my real self,
 Somewhere between the throne, and
 where I sit
 Here on this spot of earth. Search,
 Thea, search !
 Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them
 round
 Upon all space : space starr'd, and lorn
 of light ;
 Space region'd with life-air ; and barren
 void ;
 Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.—
 Search, Thea, search ! and tell me, if
 thou seest
 A certain shape or shadow, making way
 With wings or chariot fierce to repossess
 A heaven he lost erewhile : it must—it
 must
 Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be
 King.
 Yes, there must be a golden victory ;
 There must be Gods thrown down, and
 trumpets blown
 Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival
 Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,
 Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir
 Of strings in hollow shells ; and there
 shall be
 Beautiful things made new, for the sur-
 prise
 Of the sky-children ; I will give com-
 mand :
 Thea ! Thea ! Thea ! where is Saturn ? ”

This passion lifted him upon his feet,
 And made his hands to struggle in the air,
 His Druid locks to shake and ooze with
 sweat,
 His eyes to fever out, his voice to cease.
 He stood, and heard not Thea's sobbing
 deep ;
 A little time, and then again he snatch'd
 Utterance thus.—“ But cannot I create ?
 Cannot I form ? Cannot I fashion forth
 Another world, another universe.
 To overbear and crumble this to nought ?
 Where is another chaos ? Where ? ”—
 That word [quake
 Found way unto Olympus, and made
 The rebel three.—Thea was startled up,
 And in her bearing was a sort of hope,
 As thus she quick-voic'd spake, yet full
 of awe.

“ This cheers our fallen house : come
 to our friends,
 O Saturn ! come away, and give them
 heart :
 I know the covert, for thence came I
 hither.”
 Thus brief ; then with beseeching eyes
 she went
 With backward footing through the
 shade a space :
 He follow'd, and she turn'd to lead the
 way
 Through aged boughs, that yielded like
 the mist
 Which eagles cleave upmounting from
 their nest.

Meanwhile in other realms big tears
 were shed,
 More sorrow like to this, and such like
 woe,
 Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of
 scribe :
 The Titans fierce, self-hid, or prison-
 bound.
 Groan'd for the old allegiance once more,
 And listen'd in sharp pain for Saturn's
 voice.
 But one of the whole mammoth-brood
 still kept
 His sov'reignty, and rule, and majesty ;—
 Blazing Hyperion on his orb'd fire
 Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming
 up
 From man to the sun's God ; yet
 unsecure :
 For as among us mortals omens drear
 Fright and perplex, so also shuddered
 he—
 Not at dog's howl, or gloom-bird's hated
 screech,
 Or the familiar visiting of one
 Upon the first toll of his passing-bell,
 Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp ;
 But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve,
 Oft made Hyperion ache. His palace
 bright
 Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold,
 And touch'd with shade of bronzed
 obelisks,
 Glar'd a blood-red through all its thou-
 sand courts,
 Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries ;
 And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds
 Flush'd angrily : while sometimes eagle's
 wings,
 Unseen before by Gods or wondering
 men, [were heard,
 Darken'd the place ; and neighing steeds

Not heard before by Gods or wondering
men.

Also, when he would taste the spicy
wreaths

Of incense, breath'd aloft from sacred
hills,

Instead of sweets, his ample palate took
Savor of poisonous brass and metal sick :
And so, when harbor'd in the sleepy
west,

After the full completion of fair day,—
For rest divine upon exalted couch
And slumber in the arms of melody,

He pac'd away the pleasant hours of ease
With stride colossal, on from hall to hall ;
While far within each aisle and deep
recess,

His winged minions in close clusters
stood,

Amaz'd and full of fear ; like anxious men
Who on wide plains gather in panting
troops,

When earthquakes jar their battlements
and towers.

Even now, while Saturn, rous'd from icy
trance,

Went step for step with Thea through
the woods,

Hyperion, leaving twilight in the rear,
Came slope upon the threshold of the
west ;

Then, as was wont, his palace-door flew
ope

In smoothest silence, save what solemn
tubes,

Blown by the serious Zephyrs, gavé of
sweet

And wandering sounds, slow-breathed
melodies ;

And like a rose in vermeil tint and shape,
In fragrance soft, and coolness to the eye,

That inlet to severe magnificence
Stood full blown, for the God to enter in.

He enter'd, but he enter'd full of wrath ;
His flaming robes stream'd out beyond
his heels,

And gave a roar, as if of earthly fire.
That scar'd away the meek ethereal
Hours

And made their dove-wings tremble.
On he flared,

From stately nave to nave, from vault
to vault,

Through bowers of fragrant and en-
wreathed light,

And diamond-paved lustrous long ar-
cades,

Until he reach'd the great main cupola ;

There standing fierce beneath, he
stamped his foot,
And from the basements deep to the high
towers

Jarr'd his own golden region ; and before
The quavering thunder thereupon had
ceas'd,

His voice leapt out, despite of godlike
curb,

To this result : " O dreams of day and
night !

O monstrous forms ! O effigies of pain !
O spectres busy in a cold, cold gloom !

O lank-ear'd Phantoms of black-weeded
pools !

Why do I know ye ? why have I seen
ye ? why

Is my eternal essence thus distraught
To see and to behold these horrors new ?

Saturn is fallen, am I too to fall ?
Am I to leave this haven of my rest,

This cradle of my glory, this soft clime,
This calm luxuriance of blissful light,

These crystalline pavilions, and pure
fanes,

Of all my lucent empire ? It is left
Deserted, void, nor any haunt of mine.

The blaze, the splendor, and the sym-
metry,

I cannot see—but darkness, death and
darkness.

Even here, into my centre of repose,
The shady visions come to domineer,

Insult, and blind, and stifle up my
pomp.—

Fall !—No, by Tellus and her briny robes !
Over the fiery frontier of my realms

I will advance a terrible right arm
Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel
Jove,

And bid old Saturn take his throne
again."

He spake, and ceas'd, the while a heavier
threat

Held struggle with his throat but came
not forth ;

For as in theatres of crowded men
Hubbub increases more they call out

" Hush !"

So at Hyperion's words the Phantoms
pale

Bestirr'd themselves, thrice horrible and
cold ;

And from the mirror'd level where he
stood

A mist arose, as from a scummy marsh.
At this, through all his bulk an agony

Crept gradual, from the feet unto the
crown,

Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular
 Making slow way, with head and neck
 convuls'd
 From over-strained might. Releas'd, he
 fled
 To the eastern gates, and full six dewy
 hours
 Before the dawn in season due should
 blush,
 He breath'd fierce breath against the
 sleepy portals.
 Clear'd them of heavy vapors, burst
 them wide
 Suddenly on the ocean's chilly streams.
 The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode
 Each day from east to west the heavens
 through,
 Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds :
 Not therefore veiled quite, blindfold,
 and hid,
 But ever and anon the glancing spheres,
 Circles, and arcs, and broad-belting
 colure,
 Glow'd through, and wrought upon the
 muffling dark
 Sweet-shaped lightnings from the nadir
 deep
 Up to the zenith,—hieroglyphics old,
 Which sages and keen-eyed astrologers
 Then living on the earth, with laboring
 thought
 Won from the gaze of many centuries :
 Now lost, save what we find on remnants
 huge
 Of stone, or marble swart ; their import
 gone,
 Their wisdom long since fled.—Two
 wings this orb
 Possess'd for glory, two fair argent
 wings,
 Ever exalted at the God's approach :
 And now, from forth the gloom their
 plumes immense
 Rose, one by one, till all outspread
 were ;
 While still the dazzling globe maintain'd
 eclipse,
 Awaiting for Hyperion's command.
 Fain would he have commanded, fain
 took throne
 And bid the day begin, if but for change.
 He might not :—No, though a primeval
 God :
 The sacred seasons might not be
 disturb'd.
 Therefore the operations of the dawn
 Stay'd in their birth, even as here 'tis told.
 Those silver wings expanded sisterly,
 Eager to sail their orb ; the porches wide

Open'd upon the dusk demesnes of night ;
 And the bright Titan, phrenzied with
 new woes,
 Unus'd to bend, by hard compulsion bent
 His spirit to the sorrow of the time ;
 And all along a dismal rack of clouds,
 Upon the boundaries of day and night,
 He stretch'd himself in grief and radi-
 ance faint.
 There as he lay, the Heaven with its
 stars
 Look'd down on him with pity, and the
 voice
 Of Coelus, from the universal space,
 Thus whisper'd low and solemn in his
 ear.
 " O brightest of my children dear, earth-
 born
 And sky-engendered, Son of Mysteries
 All unrevealed even to the powers
 Which met at thy creating ; at whose joy
 And palpitations sweet, and pleasures
 soft,
 I, Coelus, wonder, how they came and
 whence ;
 And at the fruits thereof what shapes
 they be,
 Distinct, and visible ; symbols divine,
 Manifestations of that beauteous life
 Diffus'd unseen throughout eternal
 space ;
 Of these new-form'd art thou, oh
 brightest child !
 Of these, thy brethren and the God-
 desses !
 There is sad feud among ye, and rebel-
 lion
 Of son against his sire. I saw him fall,
 I saw my first-born tumbled from his
 throne !
 To me his arms were spread, to me his
 voice
 Found way from forth the thunders
 round his head !
 Pale wox I and in vapors hid my face.
 Art thou, too, near such doom ? vague
 fear there is :
 For I have seen my sons most unlike
 Gods.
 Divine ye were created, and divine
 In sad demeanor, solemn, undisturb'd,
 Unruffled, like high Gods, ye liv'd and
 ruled ;
 Now I behold in you fear, hope, and
 wrath ;
 Actions of rage and passion ; even as
 I see them, on the mortal world beneath,
 In men who die.—This is the grief, O
 Son !

Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay, and fall!

Yet do thou strive; as thou art capable,
As thou canst move about, an evident God;

And canst oppose to each malignant hour
Ethereal presence:—I am but a voice;
My life is but the life of winds and tides,
No more than winds and tides can I avail:—

But thou canst.—Be thou therefore in the van

Of circumstance; yea, seize the arrow's barb

Before the tense string murmur.—To the earth!

For there thou wilt find Saturn, and his woes.

Meantime I will keep watch on thy bright sun,

And of thy seasons be a careful nurse.”—

Ere half this region-whisper had come down,

Hyperion arose, and on the stars
Lifted his curv'd lids, and kept them wide

Until it ceas'd; and still he kept them wide:

And still they were the same bright, patient stars.

Then with a slow incline of his broad breast,

Like to a diver in the pearly seas,
Forward he stoop'd over the airy shore,

And plung'd all noiseless into the deep night.

BOOK II

JUST at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings

Hyperion slid into the rustled air,
And Saturn gain'd with Thea that sad place

Where Cybele and the bruised Titans mourn'd.

It was a den where no insulting light
Could glimmer on their tears; where their own groans

They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar

Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse,

Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where.

Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks that seem'd

Ever as if just rising from a sleep,

Forehead to forehead held their monstrous horns;

And thus in thousand hugest phantasies
Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.

Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat upon,

Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge
Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assembled:

Some chain'd in torture, and some wandering.

Cœus, and Gyges, and Briareüs,
Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyryon,

With many more, the brawniest in assault,

Were pent in regions of laborious breath;
Dungeon'd in opaque element, to keep

Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and all their limbs

Lock'd up like veins of metal, cramp'd and screw'd;

Without a motion, save of their big hearts

Heaving in pain, and horribly convuls'd
With sanguine feverous boiling gurge of pulse.

Mnemosyne was straying in the world;
Far from her moon had Phœbe wander'd;

And many else were free to roam abroad,
But for the main, here found they covert drear.

Scarce images of life, one here, one there,
Lay vast and edgeways; like a dismal cirque

Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,
When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,

In dull November, and their chancel vault,

The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.

Each one kept shroud, nor to his neighbor gave

Or word, or look, or action of despair.

Crœus was one; his ponderous iron mace
Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock

Told of his rage, ere he thus sank and pined.

Iäpetus another; in his grasp,
A serpent's plashy neck; its barbed tongue

Squeeze'd from the gorge, and all its uncurl'd length

Dead; and because the creature could not spit

Its poison in the eyes of conquering Jove.

Next Cottus: prone he lay, chin upper-

[most,

As though in pain; for still upon the
flint
He ground severe his skull, with open
mouth
And eyes at horrid working. Nearest
him
Asia, born of most enormous Caf,
Who cost her mother Tellus keener
pangs,
Though feminine, than any of her sons:
More thought than woe was in her dusky
face,
For she was prophesying of her glory;
And in her wide imagination stood
Palm-shaded temples, and high rival
fanés.
By Oxus or in Ganges' sacred isles.
Even as Hope upon her anchor leans,
So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk
Shed from the broadest of her elephants.
Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelf,
Upon his elbow rais'd, all prostrate else,
Shadow'd Enceladus; once tame and
mild
As grazing ox unworried in the meads;
Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted,
wroth,
He meditated, plotted, and even now
Was hurling mountains in that second
war,
Not long delay'd, that scar'd the younger
Gods
To hide themselves in forms of beast and
bird.
Nor far hence Atlas; and beside him
prone
Phorcus, the sire of Gorgons. Neighbor'd close
Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap
Sobb'd Clymene among her tangled hair.
In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet
Of Ops the queen all clouded round
from sight;
No shape distinguishable, more than
when
Thick night confounds the pine-tops with
the clouds:
And many else whose names may not be
told.
For when the Muse's wings are air-ward
spread,
Who shall delay her flight? And she
must chant
Of Saturn, and his guide, who now had
climb'd [depth
With damp and slippery footing from a
More horrid still. Above a sombre cliff
Their heads appear'd, and up their
stature grew

Till on the level height their steps found
ease:
Then Thea spread abroad her trembling
arms
Upon the precincts of this nest of pain,
And sidelong fix'd her eye on Saturn's
face:
There saw she direst strife; the supreme
God
At war with all the frailty of grief,
Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,
Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all
despair.
Against these plagues he strove in vain;
for Fate
Had pour'd a mortal oil upon his head,
A disanointing poison: so that Thea,
Affrighted, kept her still, and let him
pass
First onwards in, among the fallen
tribe.

As with us mortal men, the laden
heart
Is persecuted more, and fever'd more,
When it is nighing to the mournful house
Where other hearts are sick of the same
bruise;
So Saturn, as he walk'd into the midst,
Felt faint, and would have sunk among
the rest,
But that he met Enceladus's eye,
Whose mightiness, and awe of him, at
once
Came like an inspiration; and he
shouted,
"Titans, behold your God!" at which
some groan'd;
Some started on their feet; some also
shouted;
Some wept, some wail'd, all bow'd with
reverence;
And Ops, upifting her black folded veil,
Show'd her pale cheeks, and all her
forehead wan,
Her eye-brows thin and jet, and hollow
eyes.
There is a roaring in the bleak-grown
pines
When Winter lifts his voice; there is a
noise
Among immortals when a God gives
sign,
With hushing finger, how he means to
load
His tongue with the full weight of utter-
less thought,
With thunder, and with music, and with
pomp:

Such noise is like the roar of bleak-grown pines ;

Which, when it ceases in this mountain'd world,

No other sound succeeds ; but ceasing here,

Among these fallen, Saturn's voice therefrom

Grew up like organ, that begins anew
Its strain, when other harmonies, stopt short,

Leave the dinn'd air vibrating silverly.
Thus grew it up—"Not in my own sad breast,

Which is its own great judge and searcher out,

Can I find reason why ye should be thus :
Not in the legends of the first of days,
Studied from that old spirit-leaved book
Which starry Uranus with finger bright
Sav'd from the shores of darkness, when
the waves

Low-ebb'd still hid it up in shallow gloom ;—

And the which book ye know I ever kept
For my firm-based footstool :—Ah, infirm !

Not there, nor in sign, symbol, or portent
Of element, earth, water, air, and fire,—
At war, at peace, or inter-quarrelling
One against one, or two, or three, or all
Each several one against the other three.
As fire with air loud warring when rain-floods

Drown both, and press them both against
earth's face,

Where, finding sulphur, a quadruple wrath

Unhinges the poor world ;—not in that strife,

Wherefrom I take strange lore, and read it deep,

Can I find reason why ye should be thus ;
No, no—where can unriddle, though I search,—

And pore on Nature's universal scroll
Even to swooning, why ye, Divinities,
The first-born of all shap'd and palpable
Gods,

Should cower beneath what, in comparison,

Is untremendous might. Yet ye are here,

O'erwhelm'd, and spurn'd, and batter'd,
ye are here !

O Titans, shall I say 'Arise !'—Ye groan :
Shall I say 'Crouch !'—Ye groan.

What can I then ?

O Heaven wide ! O unseen parent dear !

What can I ! Tell me, all ye brethren
Gods,

How we can war, how engine our great
wrath !

O speak your counsel now, for Saturn's
ear

Is all a-hunger'd. Thou, Oceanus,
Ponderest high and deep ; and in thy face
I see, astonied, that severe content
Which comes of thought and musing ;
give us help !

So ended Saturn ; and the God of the
Sea,

Sophist and sage, from no Athenian
grove,

But cogitation in his watery shades,
Arose, with locks not oozy, and began,
In murmurs, which his first-endeavor-
ing tongue

Caught infant-like from the far foamed
sands.

"O ye, whom wrath consumes ! who,
passion-stung,

Writhe at defeat, and nurse your
agonies !

Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears,
My voice is not a bellows unto ire.

Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring
proof

How ye, perforce, must be content to
stoop ;

And in the proof much comfort will
I give,

If ye will take that comfort in its truth.
We fall by course of Nature's law, not
force

Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn,
thou

Hast sifted well the atom-universe ;
But for this reason, that thou art the

King,

And only blind from sheer supremacy,
One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,
Through which I wandered to eternal
truth.

And first, as thou wast not the first of
powers,

So art thou not the last ; it cannot be :
Thou art not the beginning nor the end.
From chaos and parental darkness came
Light, the first fruits of that intestine
broil,

That sullen ferment, which for wondrous
ends

Was ripening in itself. The ripe hour
came,

And with it light, and light, engender-
ing

Upon its own producer, forthwith
touch'd

The whole enormous matter into life.
Upon that very hour, our parentage,
The Heavens and the Earth, were mani-
fest :

Then thou first-born, and we the giant-
race,

Found ourselves ruling new and beau-
teous realms.

Now comes the pain of truth, to whom
'tis pain :

O folly ! for to bear all naked truths,
And to envisage circumstance, all calm,
That is the top of sovereignty. Mark
well !

As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer
far

Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though
once chiefs ;

And as we show beyond that Heaven
and Earth

In form 'and shape compact and beau-
tiful,

In will, in action free, companionship,
And thousand other signs of purer life ;
So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,
A power more strong in beauty, born
of us

And fated to excel us, as we pass
In glory that old Darkness : nor are we
Thereby more conquer'd, than by us the
rule

Of shapeless Chaos. Say, doth the dull
soil

Quarrel with the proud forests it hath
fed,

And feedeth still, more comely than
itself ?

Can it deny the chiefdom of green
groves ?

Or shall the tree be envious of the dove
Because it cooeth, and hath snowy wings
To wander wherewithal and find its joys ?
We are such forest-trees, and our fair
boughs

Have bred forth, not pale solitary doves,
But eagles golden-feather'd, who do
tower

Above us in their beauty, and must reign
In right thereof ; for 'tis the eternal law
That first in beauty should be first in
might :

Yea, by that law, another race may drive
Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.
Have ye beheld the young God of the
Seas,

My disposessor ? Have ye seen his face ?
Have ye beheld his chariot, foam'd along

By noble winged creatures he hath
made ?

I saw him on the calmed waters scud,
With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,
That it enforc'd me to bid sad farewell
To all my empire : farewell sad I took,
And hither came, to see how dolorous
fate

Had wrought upon ye ; and how I might
best

Give consolation in this woe extreme.
Receive the truth, and let it be your
balm."

Whether through poz'd conviction, or
disdain,

They guarded silence, when Oceanus
Left murmuring, what deepest thought
can tell ?

But so it was, none answer'd for a
space,

Save one whom none regarded, Cly-
mene ;

And yet she answer'd not, only com-
plain'd,

With hectic lips, and eyes up-looking
mild,

Thus wording timidly among the fierce :
" O Father, I am here the simplest
voice,

And all my knowledge is that joy is gone,
And this thing woe crept in among our
hearts,

There to remain for ever, as I fear :
I would not bode of evil, if I thought

So weak a creature could turn off the help
Which by just right should come of
mighty Gods ;

Yet let me tell my sorrow, let me tell
Of what I heard, and how it made me
weep,

And know that we had parted from all
hope.

I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore,
Where a sweet clime was breathed from
a land

Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and
flowers.

Full of calm joy it was, as I of grief ;
Too full of joy and soft delicious
warmth ;

So that I felt a movement in my heart
To chide, and to reproach that solitude
With songs of misery, music of our woes ;
And sat me down, and took a mouthed
shell

And murmur'd into it, and made me-
lody—

O melody no more ! for while I sang,

And with poor skill let pass into the breeze
 The dull shell's echo, from a bowery strand
 Just opposite, an island of the sea,
 There came enchantment with the shifting wind,
 That did both drown and keep alive my ears.
 I threw my shell away upon the sand,
 And a wave fill'd it, as my sense was fill'd
 With that new blissful golden melody.
 A living death was in each gush of sounds,
 Each family of rapturous hurried notes,
 That fell, one after one, yet all at once,
 Like pearl beads dropping sudden from their string :
 And then another, then another strain,
 Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,
 With music wing'd instead of silent plumes,
 To hover round my head, and make me sick
 Of joy and grief at once. Grief overcame,
 And I was stopping up my frantic ears.
 When, past all hindrance of my trembling hands,
 A voice came sweeter, sweeter than all tune,
 And still it cried, 'Apollo! young Apollo!
 The morning-bright Apollo! young Apollo!
 I fled, it follow'd me, and cried 'Apollo!'
 O Father, and O Brethren, had ye felt
 Those pains of mine; O Saturn, hadst thou felt,
 Ye would not call this too indulgent tongue
 Presumptuous, in thus venturing to be heard."

So far her voice flow'd on, like timorous brook
 That, lingering along a pebbled coast,
 Doth fear to meet the sea: but sea it met,
 And shudder'd; for the overwhelming voice
 Of huge Enceladus swallow'd it in wrath:
 The ponderous syllables, like sullen waves
 In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks,
 Came booming thus, while still upon his arm [contempt.
 He lean'd; not rising, from supreme

"Or shall we listen to the over-wise,
 Or to the over-foolish giant, Gods?
 Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all
 That rebel Jove's whole armory were spent,
 Not world on world upon these shoulders piled,
 Could agonize me more than baby-words
 In midst of this dethronement horrible.
 Speak! roar! shout! yell! ye sleepy Titans all.
 Do ye forget the blows, the buffets vile?
 Are ye not smitten by a youngling arm?
 Dost thou forget, sham Monarch of the Waves,
 Thy scalding in the seas? What, have I rous'd
 Your spleens with so few simple words as these?
 O joy! for now I see ye are not lost:
 O joy! for now I see a thousand eyes
 Wide glaring for revenge!"—As this he said,
 He lifted up his stature vast, and stood,
 Still without intermission speaking thus:
 "Now ye are flames, I'll tell you how to burn,
 And purge the ether of our enemies;
 How to feed fierce the crooked stings of fire,
 And singe away the swollen clouds of Jove,
 Stifling that puny essence in its tent.
 O let him feel the evil he hath done;
 For though I scorn Oceanus's lore,
 Much pain have I for more than loss of realms:
 The days of peace and slumberous calm are fled;
 Those days, all innocent of scathing war,
 When all the fair Existences of heaven
 Came open-eyed to guess what we would speak:—
 That was before our brows were taught to frown,
 Before our lips knew else but solemn sounds;
 That was before we knew the winged thing,
 Victory, might be lost, or might be won.
 And be ye mindful that Hyperion,
 Our brightest brother, still is disgraced—
 Hyperion, lo! his radiance is here!"

All eyes were on Enceladus's face,
 And they beheld, while still Hyperion's name
 Flew from his lips up to the vaulted rocks.

A pallid gleam across his features stern :
 Not savage, for he saw full many a God
 Wroth as himself. He look'd upon
 them all,
 And in each face he saw a gleam of
 light,
 But splendor in Saturn's, whose hoar
 locks
 Shone like the bubbling foam about a
 keel
 When the prow sweeps into a midnight
 cove.
 In pale and silver silence they remain'd,
 Till suddenly a splendor, like the morn,
 Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,
 All the sad spaces of oblivion,
 And every gulf, and every chasm old,
 And every height, and every sullen
 depth,
 Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented
 streams :
 And all the everlasting cataracts,
 And ail the headlong torrents far and
 near,
 Mantled before in darkness and huge
 shade,
 Now saw the light and made it terrible.
 It was Hyperion—a granite peak
 His bright feet touch'd, and there he
 stay'd to view
 The misery his brilliance had betray'd
 To the most hateful seeing of itself.
 Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,
 Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade
 In midst of his own brightness, like the
 bulk
 Of Memnon's image at the set of sun
 To one who travels from the dusking
 East :
 Sighs, too, as mournful as that Mem-
 non's harp [tive
 He utter'd, while his hands contempla-
 He press'd together, and in silence
 stood.
 Despondence seiz'd again the fallen Gods
 At sight of the dejected King of Day,
 And many hid their faces from the
 light :
 But fierce Enceladus sent forth his eyes
 Among the brotherhood ; and, at their
 glare,
 Uprose Iäpetus, and Creüs too,
 And Phorcus, sea-born, and together
 strode
 To where he towered on his eminence.
 There those four shouted forth old
 Saturn's name ;
 Hyperion from the peak loud answered,
 "Saturn !"

Saturn sat near the Mother of the Gods,
 In whose face was no joy, though all the
 Gods
 Gave from their hollow throats the name
 of "Saturn !"

BOOK III

THUS in alternate uproar and sad peace,
 Amazed were those Titans utterly.
 O leave them, Muse ! O leave them to
 their woes ;
 For thou art weak to sing such tumults
 dire :
 A solitary sorrow best befits
 Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.
 Leave them, O Muse ! for thou anon wilt
 find
 Many a fallen old Divinity
 Wandering in vain about bewildered
 shores.
 Meantime touch piously the Delphic
 harp,
 And not a wind of heaven but will
 breathe
 In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute ;
 For lo ! 'tis for the Father of all verse.
 Flush every thing that hath a vermeil
 hue,
 Let the rose glow intense and warm the
 air,
 And let the clouds of even and of morn
 Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills ;
 Let the red wine within the goblet boil,
 Cold as a bubbling well ; let faint-lipp'd
 shells,
 On sands, or in great deeps, vermilion
 turn
 Through all their labyrinths ; and let the
 maid
 Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss
 surpris'd.
 Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,
 Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives
 green,
 And poplars, and lawn-shading palms,
 and beech,
 In which the zephyr breathes the loud-
 est song,
 And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath
 the shade :
 Apollo is once more the golden theme !
 Where was he, when the Giant of the
 Sun
 Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his
 peers ?
 Together had he left his mother fair
 And his twin-sister sleeping in their
 bower,

And in the morning twilight wandered forth

Beside the osiers of a rivulet,
Full ankle-deep in lilies of the vale.

The nightingale had ceas'd, and a few stars

Were lingering in the heavens, while the thrush

Began calm-throated. Throughout all the isle

There was no covert, no retired cave
Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves,

Though scarcely heard in many a green recess.

He listen'd, and he wept, and his bright tears

Went trickling down the golden bow he held.

Thus with half-shut suffused eyes he stood,

While from beneath some cumbrous boughs hard by

With solemn step an awful Goddess came,

And there was purport in her looks for him,

Which he with eager guess began to read
Perplex'd, the while melodiously he said :

"How cam'st thou over the unfooted sea ?

Or hath that antique mien and robed form

Mov'd in these vales invisible till now ?

Sure I have heard those vestments sweeping o'er

The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone
In cool mid-forest. Surely I have traced

The rustle of those ample skirts about
These grassy solitudes, and seen the flowers

Lift up their heads, as still the whisper pass'd. [fore,

Goddess! I have beheld those eyes be-
And their eternal calm, and all that face,
Or I have dream'd."—"Yes," said the supreme shape,

"Thou hast dream'd of me ; and awak-
ing up

Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side,
Whose strings touch'd by thy fingers,
all the vast

Unwearied ear of the whole universe
Listen'd in pain and pleasure at the birth
Of such new tuneful wonder. Is't not strange

That thou shouldst weep, so gifted?
Tell me, youth,

What sorrow thou canst feel ; for I am sad

When thou dost shed a tear : explain thy griefs

To one who in this lonely isle hath been
The watcher of thy sleep and hours of life,

From the young day when first thy infant hand

Pluck'd witless the weak flowers, till thine arm

Could bend that bow heroic to all times.
Show thy heart's secret to an ancient Power

Who hath forsaken old and sacred thrones

For prophecies of thee, and for the sake
Of loveliness new born."—Apollo then,
With sudden scrutiny and gloomless eyes,
Thus answer'd, while his white melodious throat

Throb'd with the syllables.—"Mnemosyne !

Thy name is on my tongue, I know not how ;

Why should I tell thee what thou so well seest ?

Why should I strive to show what from thy lips

Would come no mystery ? For me, dark, dark,

And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes :
I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,
Until a melancholy numbs my limbs ;
And then upon the grass I sit, and moan,
Like one who once had wings.—O why should I

Feel curs'd and thwarted, when the liegeless air

Yields to my step aspirant ? why should I

Spurn the green turf as hateful to my feet ?

Goddess benign, point forth some unknown thing :

Are there not other regions than this isle ?

What are the stars ? There is the sun, the sun !

And the most patient brilliance of the moon !

And stars by thousands ! Point me out the way

To any one particular beauteous star,
And I will flit into it with my lyre,
And make its silvery splendor pant with bliss.

I have heard the cloudy thunder :
Where is power ?

Whose hand, whose essence, what
divinity
Makes this alarum in the elements,
While I here idle listen on the shore
In fearless yet in aching ignorance?
O tell me, lonely Goddess, by thy harp,
That wailleth every morn and eventide,
Tell me why thus I rave, about these
groves!
Mute thou remainest—Mute! yet I can
read

A wondrous lesson in thy silent face:
Knowledge enormous makes a God of
me.

Names, deeds, gray legends, dire events,
rebellions,

Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,
Creations and destroyings, all at once
Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,
And deify me, as if some blithe wine
Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,
And so become immortal.”—Thus the
God,

While his enkindled eyes, with level
glance

Beneath his white soft temples, steadfast
kept

Trembling with light upon Mnemosyne.
Soon wild commotions shook him, and
made flush

All the immortal fairness of his limbs;
Most like the struggle at the gate of
death;

Or liker still to one who should take
leave

Of pale immortal death, and with a
pang

As hot as death's is chill, with fierce
convulse

Die into life; so young Apollo anguish'd;
His very hair, his golden tresses famed
Kept undulation round his eager neck.
During the pain Mnemosyne upheld
Her arms as one who prophesied.—At
length

Apollo shriek'd;—and lo! from all his
limbs

Celestial * * * * *

September, 1818—September, 1819. 1820.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

BALLAD

O WHAT can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering!
The sedge has wither'd from the lake,
And no birds sing.

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms!
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew,
And on thy cheeks a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautiful—a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She look'd at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long.
For sidelong would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said—
“I love thee true.”

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept, and sigh'd full
sore,
And there I shut her wild wild eyes
With kisses four.

And there she lull'd me asleep,
And there I dream'd—Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill's side.

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they
all;
They cried—“La Belle Dame sans Merci
Hath thee in thrall!”

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloam,
With horrid warning gap'd wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

And this is why I sojourn here,
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is wither'd from the
lake
And no birds sing.

1819. May 10, 1820.

ON FAME

I

FAME, like a wayward girl, will still be
 coy
 To those who woo her with too slavish
 knees,
 But makes surrender to some thought-
 less boy,
 And dotes the more upon a heart at ease;
 She is a Gipsy,—will not speak to those
 Who have not learnt to be content with-
 out her;
 A Jilt, whose ear was never whisper'd
 close,
 Who thinks they scandal her who talk
 about her;
 A very Gipsy is she, Nilus-born,
 Sister-in-law to jealous Potiphar;
 Ye love-sick Bards! repay her scorn for
 scorn;
 Ye Artists lovelorn! madmen that ye
 are!
 Make your best bow to her and bid adieu,
 Then, if she likes it, she will follow you.

II

How fever'd is the man, who cannot
 look
 Upon his mortal days with temperate
 blood,
 Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book,
 And robs his fair name of its maiden-
 hood;
 It is as if the rose should pluck herself,
 Or the ripe plum finger its misty bloom,
 As if a Naiad, like a meddling elf,
 Should darken her pure grot with muddy
 gloom:
 But the rose leaves herself upon the briar,
 For winds to kiss and grateful bees to
 feed,
 And the ripe plum still wears its dim
 attire,
 The undisturbed lake has crystal space;
 Why then should man, teasing the world
 for grace,
 Spoil his salvation for a fierce miscreed?

1819. 1848.

TO SLEEP

O soft embalmer of the still midnight,
 Shutting with careful fingers and
 benign,
 Our gloom-pleased eyes, embowered
 from the light,
 Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:
 O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee,
 close,
 In midst of this thine hymn, my willing
 eyes,
 Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws
 Around my bed its lulling charities;
 Then save me, or the passéd day will
 shine
 Upon my pillow, breeding many woes,—
 Save me from curious conscience, that
 still lords
 Its strength for darkness, burrowing like
 a mole;
 Turn the key deftly in the oiled wards,
 And seal the hush'd casket of my soul.
 1819. 1848.

BRIGHT STAR! WOULD I WERE
STEADFAST AS THOU ART

BRIGHT star! would I were steadfast as
 thou art—
 Not in lone splendor hung aloft the
 night,
 And watching, with eternal lids apart,
 Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremite,
 The moving waters at their priestlike
 task
 Of pure ablution round earth's human
 shores,
 Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
 Of snow upon the mountains and the
 moors—
 No—yet still steadfast, still unchange-
 able,
 Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening
 breast,
 To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
 Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
 Still, still to hear her tender-taken
 breath,
 And so live ever—or else swoon to death.
 September, 1820. February, 1846.

LANDOR

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LANDOR

GEBIR

BOOK I

THE INVASION. THE MEETING OF GEBIR
AND CHAROBA. THE LOVES OF TAMAR
AND THE SEA-NYMPH. THE SEASHELL.
THE WRESTLING-MATCH.

I SING the fates of Gebir. He had
dwelt
Among those mountain-caverns which
retain
His labors yet, vast halls and flowing
wells,
Nor have forgotten their old master's
name
Though sever'd from his people: here,
incensed
By meditating on primeval wrongs,
He blew his battle-horn, at which uprose
Whole nations; here, ten thousand of
most might
He call'd aloud; and soon Charoba saw
His dark helm hover o'er the land of
Nile.

What should the virgin do? should
royal knees
Bend suppliant? or defenceless hands
engage
Men of gigantic force, gigantic arms?
For 'twas reported that nor sword suf-
ficed,

Nor shield immense nor coat of massive
mail,
But that upon their towering heads they
bore
Each a huge stone, refulgent as the stars.
This told she Dalica, then cried aloud,
"If on your bosom laying down my head
I sobb'd away the sorrows of a child,
If I have always, and Heav'n knows I
have,
Next to a mother's held a nurse's name,
Succor this one distress, recall those
days,
Love me, tho' 'twere because you lov'd
me then."

But whether confident in magic rites
Or touched with sexual pride to stand
implor'd,
Dalica smiled, then spake: "Away
those fears,
Though stronger than the strongest of
his kind,
He falls; on me devolve that charge;
he falls.
Rather than fly him, stoop thou to al-
lure;
Nay, journey to his tents. A city stood
Upon that coast, they say, by Sidat
built, [ground
Whose father Gad built Gadir; on this
Perhaps he sees an ample room for war.
Persuade him to restore the walls him-
self

In honor of his ancestors, persuade . . .
But wherefore this advice? young, un-
espoused,

Charoba want persuasions! and a
queen!"

"O Dalica!" the shuddering maid
exclaim'd,

"Could I encounter that fierce frightful
man?"

Could I speak? no, nor sigh." "And
canst thou reign?"

Cried Dalica; "Yield empire or com-
ply."

Unfixed, though seeming fixed, her
eyes downcast,

The wonted buzz and bustle of the court
From far through sculptured galleries
met her ear;

Then lifting up her head, the evening
sun

Pour'd a fresh splendor on her burnished
throne:

The fair Charoba, the young queen, com-
plied.

But Gebir, when he heard of her ap-
proach,

Laid by his orbed shield; 'tis vizor-helm,
His buckler and his corslet he laid by,
And bade that none attend him: at his
side

Two faithful dogs that urge the silent
course,

Shaggy, deep-chested, crouched; the
crocodile,

Crying, oft made them raise their flaccid
ears

And push their heads within their mas-
ter's hand.

There was a brightening paleness in his
face,

Such as Diana rising o'er the rocks
Shower'd on the lonely Latmian; on his
brow

Sorrow there was, yet nought was there
severe.

But when the royal damsel first he saw,
Faint, hanging on her handmaids, and
her knees

Tottering, as from the motion of the
car,

His eyes looked earnest on her, and
those eyes

Show'd, if they had not, that they might
have, lov'd,

For there was pity in them at that hour.
With gentle speech, and more with
gentle looks,

He sooth'd her; but lest Pity go beyond
And crost Ambition lose her lofty aim .

Bending, he kissed her garment, and
retired.

He went, nor slumber'd in the sultry
noon,

When viands, couches, generous wines,
persuade,

And slumber most refreshes; nor at night,
When heavy dews are laden with disease;

And blindness waits not there for linger-
ing age.

Ere morning dawn'd behind him, he
arrived

At those rich meadows where young
Tamar fed

The royal flocks entrusted to his care.

"Now," said he to himself, "will I repose
At least this burthen on a brother's
breast."

His brother stood before him: he, amazed,
Rear'd suddenly his head, and thus began.

"Is it thou, brother! Tamar, is it thou!
Why, standing on the valley's utmost
verge,

Lookest thou on that dull and dreary
shore

Where beyond sight Nile blackens all
the sand?

And why that sadness? When I past our
sheep

The dew-drops were not shaken off the
bar,

Therefore if one be wanting, 'tis untold."

"Yes, one is wanting, nor is that
untold,"

Said Tamar; "and this dull and dreary
shore

Is neither dull nor dreary at all hours."
Whereon the tear stole silent down his
cheek,

Silent, but not by Gebir unobserv'd:

Wondering he gazed awhile, and pitying
spake.

"Let me approach thee; does the morn-
ing light

Scatter this wan suffusion o'er thy brow,
This faint blue lustre under both thine
eyes?"

"O brother, is this pity or reproach?"
Cried Tamar, "cruel if it be reproach,

If pity, O how vain!" "Whate'er it be
That grieves thee, I will pity, thou but
speak,

And I can tell thee, Tamar, pang for
pang."

"Gebir! then more than brothers are
we now!

Everything (take my hand) will I confess.
I neither feed the flock nor watch the
fold;

How can I, lost in love? But, Gebir, why
That anger which has risen to your
cheek?

Can other men? could you? what, no
reply!

And still more anger, and still worse
conceal'd!

Are these your promises? your pity
this?"

"Tamar, I well may pity what I feel—
Mark me aright—I feel for thee—
proceed—

Relate me all." "Then will I all relate,"
Said the young shepherd, gladden'd
from his heart.

"'Twas evening, though not sunset, and
the tide

Level with these green meadows, seem'd
yet higher:

'Twas pleasant; and I loosen'd from my
neck

The pipe you gave me, and began to play.
O that I ne'er had learnt the tuneful art!
It always brings us enemies or love.

Well, I was playing, when above the
waves

Some swimmer's head methought I saw
ascend;

I, sitting still, survey'd it, with my pipe
Awkwardly held before my lips half-
closed,

Gebir! it was a Nymph! a Nymph
divine!

I cannot wait describing how she came,
How I was sitting, how she first assum'd
The sailor; of what happen'd there re-
mains

Enough to say, and too much to forget.
The sweet deceiver stepped upon this
bank

Before I was aware; for with surprise
Moments fly rapid as with love itself.

Stooping to tune afresh the hoarsen'd
reed,

I heard a rustling, and where that arose
My glance first lighted on her nimble
feet.

Her feet resembled those long shells
explored

By him who to befriend his steed's dim
sight

Would blow the pungent powder in the
eye.

Her eyes too! O immortal Gods! her
eyes

Resembled—what could they resemble?
what

Ever resemble those? Even her attire
Was not of wonted woof nor vulgar art:

Her mantle show'd the yellow samphire-
pod,

Her girdle the dove-color'd wave serene.
"Shepherd," said she, "and will you

wrestle now,
And with the sailor's hardier race en-
gage?"

I was rejoiced to hear it, and contrived
How to keep up contention: could I fail

By pressing not too strongly, yet to
press?

"Whether a shepherd, as indeed you
seem,

Or whether of the hardier race you boast,
I am not daunted; no; I will engage."

"But first," said she, "what wager will
you lay?"

"A sheep," I answered: "add whate'er
you will."

"I can not," she replied, "make that
return;

Our hid'd vessels in their pitchy round
Seldom, unless from rapine, hold a sheep,

But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue
Within, and they that lustre have im-
bibed

In the sun's palace-porch, where when
unyoked

His chariot-wheel stands midway in the
wave:

Shake one and it awakens, then apply
Its polish'd lips to your attentive ear,

And it remembers its august abodes,
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs
there.

And I have others given me by the
nymphs,

Of sweeter sound than any pipe you
have;

But we, by Neptune! for no pipe con-
tend,

This time a sheep I win, a pipe the next."
Now came she forward eager to engage,

But first her dress, her bosom then sur-
vey'd,

And heav'd it, doubting if she could
deceive.

Her bosom seem'd, inclos'd in haze like
heav'n,

To baffle touch, and rose forth unde-
fined:

Above her knee she drew the robe suc-
cinct,

Above her breast, and just below her
arms.

"This will preserve my breath when
tightly bound,

If struggle and equal strength should so
constrain."

Thus, pulling hard to fasten it, she spake,
 And, rushing at me, closed : I thrill'd
 throughout
 And seem'd to lessen and shrink up with
 cold.
 Again with violent impulse gushed my
 blood,
 And hearing nought external, thus ab-
 sorb'd,
 I heard it, rushing through each turbid
 vein,
 Shake my unsteady swimming sight in
 air.
 Yet with unyielding though uncertain
 arms
 I clung around her neck : the vest be-
 neath
 Rustled against our slippery limbs en-
 twined :
 Often mine springing with eluded force
 Started aside and trembled till replaced :
 And when I most succeeded, as I thought,
 My bosom and my throat felt so com-
 pressed
 That life was almost quivering on my
 lips,
 Yet nothing was there painful : these
 are signs
 Of secret arts and not of human might ;
 What arts I cannot tell ; I only know
 My eyes grew dizzy and my strength
 decay'd ;
 I was indeed o'ercome . . . with what
 regret,
 And more, with what confusion, when
 I reached
 The fold, and yielding up the sheep, she
 cried,
 "This pays a shepherd to a conquering
 maid."
 She smiled, and more of pleasure than
 disdain
 Was in her dimpled chin and liberal lip,
 And eyes that languished, lengthening,
 just like love.
 She went away ; I on the wicker gate
 Leant, and could follow with my eyes
 alone.
 The sheep she carried easy as a cloak ;
 But when I heard its bleating, as I did,
 And saw, she hastening on, its hinder
 feet [slip,
 Struggle, and from her snowy shoulder
 One shoulder its poor efforts had un-
 veil'd, [tears ;
 Then all my passions mingling fell in
 Restless then ran I to the highest ground
 To watch her ; she was gone ; gone down
 the tide ;

And the long moonbeam on the hard
 wet sand
 Lay like a jasper column half up-rear'd."
 "But, Tamar! tell me, will she not
 return?"
 "She will return, yet not before the
 moon
 Again is at the full: she promised this,
 Tho' when she promised I could not
 reply."
 "By all the Gods I pity thee! go on,
 Fear not my anger, look not on my
 shame,
 For when a lover only hears of love
 He finds his folly out, and is ashamed.
 Away with watchful nights and lonely
 days,
 Contempt of earth and aspect up to
 heaven,
 With contemplation, with humility,
 A tatter'd cloak that pride wears when
 deform'd,
 Away with all that hides me from my-
 self,
 Parts me from others, whispers I am
 wise :
 From our own wisdom less is to be reapt
 Than from the barest folly of our friend,
 Tamar! thy pastures, large and rich,
 afford
 Flowers to thy bees and herbage to thy
 sheep,
 But, batten'd on too much, the poorest
 croft
 Of thy poor neighbor yields what thine
 denies."
 They hasten'd to the camp, and Gebir
 there
 Resolved his native country to forego,
 And order'd from those ruins to the right
 They forthwith raise a city. Tamar
 heard [told,
 With wonder, tho' in passing 'twas half-
 His brother's love, and sigh'd upon his
 own. 1798.¹

ROSE AYLMEY

AH what avails the sceptred race,
 Ah what the form divine!
 What every virtue, every grace!
 Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

¹ The exact dates of *writing*, for nearly all of
 Landon's poems, are unknown; and the same is
 true for Browning, and, on the whole, for all of
 the following poets. From this point on, there-
 fore, the poems of each author will be arranged
 chronologically according to the dates of *publi-*
cation, and the dates of writing (if known) will
 be given only when especially important.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
 May weep, but never see,
 A night of memories and of sighs
 I consecrate to thee." 1803.

REGENERATION ²

We are what suns and winds and waters
 make us; [the rills
 The mountains are our sponsors, and
 Fashion and win their nursing with
 their smiles.

But where the land is dim from tyranny,
 There tiny pleasures occupy the place
 Of glories and of duties; as the feet
 Of fabled fairies when the sun goes down
 Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers
 strove by day. [above,

Then Justice, call'd the Eternal One
 Is more inconstant than the buoyant form
 That burst into existence from the froth
 Of ever-varying ocean: what is best
 Then becomes worst; what loveliest,
 most deformed.

The heart is hardest in the softest climes,
 The passions flourish, the affections die.
 O thou vast tablet of these awful truths,
 That fillest all the space between the seas,
 Spreading from Venice's deserted courts
 To the Tarentine and Hydruntine mole,
 What lifts thee up? what shakes thee?
 'tis the breath [life!

Of God. Awake, ye nations! spring to
 Let the last work of his right hand appear
 Fresh with his image, Man. Thou
 recreant slave

That sittest afar off and helpest not,
 O thou degenerate Albion! ³ with what
 shame

¹ Rose Aylmer, the daughter of Henry, fourth Baron Aylmer, was Landor's companion in his walks about Swansea ("Abertawy") in Wales. She went to India, and died there in 1800. Landor speaks of her again in two poems written late in life: *The Three Roses*, 1858, (see page 457); and *Abertawy*, 1859, the concluding lines of which almost equal in beauty this early lyric, usually considered the most beautiful of his poems:

Where is she now? Call'd far away,
 By one she dared not disobey,
 To those proud halls, for youth unfit,
 Where princes stand and judges sit,
 Where Ganges rolls his widest wave
 She dropped her blossom in the grave;
 Her noble name she never changed,
 Nor was her nobler heart estranged.

² Inspired by the struggle of the Greek people for independence.

³ "What those amongst us who are affected by a sense of national honor most lament, is, that England, whose generosity would cost her nothing and whose courage would be unexposed to fatality, stands aloof." (Landor, in the *Dedication of Imaginary Conversations*, 1829.)

Do I survey thee, pushing forth the
 sponge
 At thy spear's length, in mockery at the
 thirst

Of holy Freedom in his agony.
 And prompt and keen to pierce the
 wounded side!

Must Italy then wholly rot away
 Amid her slime, before she germinate
 Into fresh vigor, into form again?
 What thunder bursts upon mine ear!
 some isle

Hath surely risen from the gulfs pro
 found,

Eager to suck the sunshine from the
 breast

Of beauteous Nature, and to catch the
 gale

From golden Hermus and Melena's brow.
 A greater thing than isle, than continent,
 Than earth itself, than ocean circling
 earth,

Hath risen there; regenerate Man hath
 risen.

Generous old bard of Chios! not that Jove
 Deprived thee in thy latter days of sight
 Would I complain, but that no higher
 theme

Than a disdainful youth, a lawless king,
 A pestilence, a pyre, awoke thy song,
 When on the Chian coast, one javelin's
 throw

From where thy tombstone, where thy
 cradle, stood,

Twice twenty self-devoted Greeks as-
 sail'd

The naval host of Asia, at one blow ¹
 Scattered it into air . . . and Greece
 was free . . .

And ere these glories beam'd, thy day
 had closed.

Let all that Elis ever saw, give way,
 All that Olympian Jove e'er smiled
 upon:

The Marathonian columns never told
 A tale more glorious, never Salamis,
 Nor, faithful in the centre of the false,
 Platea, nor Anthela, from whose mount
 Benignant Ceres wards the blessed Laws.
 And sees the Amphictyon dip his weary
 foot

In the warm streamlet of the strait be-
 low.

Goddess! altho' thy brow was never
 rear'd [sail'd

Among the powers that guarded or as-

¹ Alluding to the victory of Canaris over the Turkish fleet. Compare the poem of Victor Hugo on the same battle, in *Les Orientales*

Perfidious Iliou, parricidal Thebes,
 Or other walls whose war-belt e'er in-
 closed
 Man's congregated crimes and vengeful
 pain,
 Yet hast thou touched the extremes of
 grief and joy;
 Grief upon Enna's mead and Hell's as-
 cent,
 A solitary mother; joy beyond,
 Far beyond, that thy woe, in this thy
 fane:
 The tears were human, but the bliss
 divine.
 I, in the land of strangers, and depressed
 With sad and certain presage for my
 own,
 Exult at hope's fresh dayspring, tho'
 afar,
 There where my youth was not unexer-
 cised
 By chiefs in willing war and faithful
 song:
 Shades as they were, they were not
 empty shades,
 Whose bodies haunt our world and blear
 our sun,
 Obstruction worse than swamp and
 shapeless sands.
 Peace, praise, eternal gladness, to the
 souls
 That, rising from the seas into the
 heavens,
 Have ransom'd first their country with
 their blood!
 O thou immortal Spartan! at whose
 name
 The marble table sounds beneath my
 palms,
 Leonidas! even thou wilt not disdain
 To mingle names august as these with
 thine;
 Nor thou, twin-star of glory, thou whose
 rays
 Stream'd over Corinth on the double
 sea,
 Achaian and Saronic; whom the sons
 Of Syracuse, when Death removed thy
 light,
 Wept more than slavery ever made them
 weep,
 But shed (if gratitude is sweet) sweet
 tears.
 The hand that then pour'd ashes o'er
 their heads
 Was loosen'd from its desperate chain
 by thee.
 What now can press mankind into one
 mass,

For Tyranny to tread the more secure?
 From gold alone is drawn the guilty
 wire [tone
 That Adulation trills: she mocks the
 Of Duty, Courage, Virtue, Piety,
 And under her sits Hope. O how unlike
 That graceful form in azure vest array'd,
 With brow serene, and eyes on heaven
 alone
 In patience fixed, in fondness unob-
 scured!
 What monsters coil beneath the spread-
 ing tree
 Of Despotism! what wastes extend
 around!
 What poison floats upon the distant
 breeze!
 But who are those that cull and deal its
 fruit?
 Creatures that shun the light and fear
 the shade,
 Bloated and fierce, Sleep's mien and
 Famine's cry.
 Rise up again, rise in thy dignity,
 Dejected Man! and scare this brood
 away. 1824.

CHILD OF A DAY, THOU KNOWEST NOT

CHILD of a day, thou knowest not
 The tears that overflow thine urn,
 The gushing eyes that read thy lot,
 Nor, if thou knewest, couldst return!
 And why the wish! the pure and blessed
 Watch like thy mother o'er thy sleep.
 O peaceful night! O envied rest!
 Thou wilt not ever see her weep. 1831.

LYRICS, TO IANTHE

AWAY my verse; and never fear,
 As men before such beauty do;
 On you she will not look severe,
 She will not turn her eyes from you.
 Some happier graces could I lend
 That in her memory you should live,
 Some little blemishes might blend,
 For it would please her to forgive.
 ———
 When Helen first saw wrinkles in her
 face
 ('Twas when some fifty long had settled
 there
 And intermarried and branched off
 awide)

She threw herself upon her couch and wept:

On this side hung her head, and over that

Listlessly she let fall the faithless brass
That made the men as faithless.

But when you
Found them, or fancied them, and would
not hear

That they were only vestiges of smiles,
Or the impression of some amorous hair
Astray from cloistered curls and roseate
band, [perhaps

Which had been lying there all night
Upon a skin so soft, "No, no," you said,
"Sure, they are coming, yes, are come,
are here:

Well, and what matters it, while thou
art too!"

Ianthe! you are call'd to cross the sea!
A path forbidden *me*!

Remember, while the Sun his blessing
sheds

Upon the mountain-heads,
How often we have watched him laying
down

His brow, and dropped our own
Against each other's, and how faint and
short

And sliding the support!
What will succeed it now? Mine is
unblessed,

Ianthe! nor will rest
But on the very thought that swells with
pain.

O bid me hope again!
O give me back what Earth, what (with-
out you)

Not Heaven itself can do,
One of the golden days that we have
past;

And let it be my last!
Or else the gift would be, however sweet,
Fragile and incomplete.

I held her hand, the pledge of bliss,
Her hand that trembled and with-
drew;

She bent her head before my kiss . . .
My heart was sure that hers was true.

Now I have told her I must part,
She shakes my hand, she bids adieu,
Nor shuns the kiss. Alas, my heart!
Hers never was the heart for you.

Pleasure! why thus desert the heart
In its spring-tide?

I could have seen her, I could part,
And but have sigh'd!

O'er every youthful charm to stray,
To gaze, to touch . . .

Pleasure! why take so much away,
Or give so much!

Mild is the parting year, and sweet
The odor of the falling spray;
Life passes on more rudely fleet,
And balmless is its closing day.

I wait its close, I court its gloom,
But mourn that never must there fall
Or on my breast or on my tomb
The tear that would have sooth'd it all

Past ruin'd Ilion Helen lives,
Alcestis rises from the shades;
Verse calls them forth; 'tis verse that
gives
Immortal youth to mortal maids.

Soon shall Oblivion's deepening veil
Hide all the peopled hills you see,
The gay, the proud, while lovers hail
These many summers you and me.

1831.

FIESOLAN IDYL

HERE, where precipitate Spring, with
one light bound

Into hot Summer's lusty arms, expires,
And where go forth at morn, at eve, at
night,

Soft airs that want the lute to play with
'em,

And softer sighs that know not what
they want,

Aside a wall, beneath an orange-tree,
Whose tallest flowers could tell the low-
lier ones

Of sights in Fiesolè right up above,
While I was gazing a few paces off
At what they seem'd to show me with
their nods,

Their frequent whispers and their point-
ing shoots,

A gentle maid came down the garden-
steps [lap.

And gathered the pure treasure in her

I heard the branches rustle, and stepped
 forth
 To drive the ox away, or mule or goat,
 Such I believed it must be. How could I
 Let beast o'erpower them? When hath
 wind or rain
 Borne hard upon weak plant that wanted
 me,
 And I (however they might bluster
 round)
 Walked off? 'Twere most ungrateful:
 for sweet scents
 Are the swift vehicles of still sweeter
 thoughts,
 And nurse and pillow the dull memory
 That would let drop without them her
 best stores.
 They bring me tales of youth and tones
 of love.
 And 'tis and ever was my wish and way
 To let all flowers live freely, and all die
 (When'er their Genius bids their souls
 depart)
 Among their kindred in their native
 place.
 I never pluck the rose; the violet's head
 Hath shaken with my breath upon its
 bank
 And not reproached me: the ever-sacred
 cup
 Of the pure lily hath between my hands
 Felt safe, unsoil'd, nor lost one grain of
 gold.
 I saw the light that made the glossy
 leaves
 More glossy; the fair arm, the fairer
 cheek
 Warmed by the eye intent on its pursuit;
 I saw the foot that, altho' half-erect
 From its gray slipper, could not lift her
 up
 To what she wanted: I held down a
 branch
 And gather'd her some blossoms; since
 their hour
 Was come, and bees had wounded them,
 and flies
 Of harder wing were working their way
 thro'
 And scattering them in fragments under-
 foot.
 So crisp were some, they rattled un-
 evolved,
 Others, ere broken off, fell into shells,
 For such appear the petals when de-
 tached
 Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like
 snow, [sun:
 And like snow not seen thro', by eye or

Yet every one her gown received from
 me
 Was fairer than the first. I thought not
 so,
 But so she praised them to reward my
 care.
 I said, "You find the largest."
 "This indeed,"
 Cried she, "is large and sweet." She
 held one forth,
 Whether for me to look at or to take
 She knew not, nor did I; but taking it
 Would best have solved (and this she
 felt) her doubt.
 I dared not touch it; for it seemed a
 part
 Of her own self; fresh, full, the most
 mature
 Of blossoms, yet a blossom; with a touch
 To fall, and yet unfallen. She drew back
 The boon she tender'd, and then, finding
 not
 The ribbon at her waist to fix it in,
 Dropped it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.
 1831.

FOR AN EPITAPH AT FIESOLE

Lo! where the four mimosas blend their
 shade
 In calm repose at last is Landor laid,
 For ere he slept he saw them planted
 here
 By her his soul had ever held most dear,
 And he had lived enough when he had
 dried her tear. 1831.

UPON A SWEET-BRIAR

My briar that smelledst sweet
 When gentle spring's first heat
 Ran through thy quiet veins,—
 Thou that wouldst injure none,
 But wouldst be left alone,
 Alone thou leavest me, and nought of
 thine remains.

What! hath no poet's lyre
 O'er thee, sweet-breathing briar,
 Hung fondly, ill or well?
 And yet methinks with thee
 A poet's sympathy,
 Whether in weal or woe, in life or death,
 might dwell.

Hard usage both must bear,
 Few hands your youth will rear,
 Few bosoms cherish you;
 Your tender prime must bleed

Ere you are sweet, but freed
From life, you then are prized; thus
prized are poets too.

.....

And art thou yet alive?
And shall the happy hive
Send out her youth to cull
Thy sweets of leaf and flower,
And spend the sunny hour
With thee, and thy faint heart with
murmuring music lull?

Tell me what tender care,
Tell me what pious prayer,
Bade thee arise and live.
The fondest-favored bee
Shall whisper nought to thee
Move loving than the song my grateful
muse shall give.

1834.¹

THE MAID'S LAMENT

I LOVED him not; and yet now he is gone
I feel I am alone.

I check'd him while he spoke; yet could
he speak.

Alas! I would not check.

For reasons not to love him once I
sought,

And wearied all my thought
To vex myself and him: I now would
give

My love, could he but live
Who lately lived for me, and when he
found

'Twas vain, in holy ground
He hid his face amid the shades of
death.

I waste for him my breath
Who wasted his for me: but mine re-
turns,

And this lorn bosom burns
With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep,
And waking me to weep
Tears that had melted his soft heart:
for years

Wept he as bitter tears.
Merciful God! such was his latest
prayer,

These may she never share.
Quieter is his breath, his breast more
cold,

Than daisies in the mould,
Where children spell, athwart the
churchyard gate,

¹ This and the following poem are from the
Citation of William Shakespeare.

His name and life's brief date.
Pray for him, gentle souls, whoe'er you
be,
And oh! pray too for me.

1834.

THE SHADES OF AGAMEMNON AND IPHIGENEIA¹

Iphigeneia. Father! I now may lean
upon your breast,
And you with unreverted eyes will grasp
Iphigeneia's hand.

We are not shades
Surely! for yours throb yet.

And did my blood
Win Troy for Greece?

Ah! 'twas ill done, to shrink;
But the sword gleam'd so sharp; and the
good priest

Trembled, and Pallas frown'd above,
severe.

Agamemnon. Daughter!

Iphigeneia. Beloved father! is the
blade

Again to pierce my bosom? 'tis unfit
For sacrifice; no blood is in its veins,
No God requires it here: here are no
wrongs

To vindicate, no realms to overthrow.
You standing as at Aulis in the fane,
With face averted, holding (as before)
My hand; but yours burns not, as then
it burn'd.

This alone shows me we are with the
Blessed,

Nor subject to the sufferings we have
borne.

I will win back past kindness.

Tell me then,
Tell how my mother fares who loved me
so,

And griev'd, as 'twere for you, to see me
part.

Frown not, but pardon me for tarrying
Amid too idle words, nor asking how
She prais'd us both (which most?) for
what we did.

Agamemnon. Ye Gods who govern
here! do human pangs

Reach the pure soul thus far below? do
tears

Spring in these meadows?

¹ "I imagine Agamemnon to descend from his
horrible death, and to meet instantly his daugh-
ter. By the nature of things, by the suddenness
of the event, Iphigeneia can have heard nothing
of her mother's double crime, adultery and
murder." *Aspasia* to Cleone, introducing the
poem as first given in *Pericles and Aspasia*, 1836.

Iphigeneia. No, sweet father, no . . .
I could have answered that; why ask
the Gods?

Agamemnon. *Iphigeneia!* O my
child! the Earth
Has gendered crimes unheard of heretofore,
And Nature may have changed in her
last depths,
Together with the Gods and all their
laws.

Iphigeneia. Father! we must not let
you here condemn;
Not, were the day less joyful: recollect
We have no wicked here; no king to
judge.

Poseidon, we have heard, with bitter
rage
Lashes his foaming steeds against the
skies,
And, laughing with loud yell at winged
fire,
Innoxious to his fields and palaces
Affrights the eagle from the sceptred
hand;

While Pluto, gentlest brother of the
three
And happiest in obedience, views sedate
His tranquil realm, nor envies theirs
above.

No change have we, not even day for
night
Nor spring for summer.

All things are serene,
Serene too be your spirit! None on earth
Ever was half so kindly in his house,
And so compliant, even to a child.
Never was snatch'd your robe away from
me,

Though going to the council. The blind
Knew his good king was leading him
indoors,

Before he heard the voice that marshal'd
Greece.

Therefore all prais'd you.

Proudest men themselves
In others praise humility, and most
Admire it in the sceptre and the sword.
What then can make you speak thus
rapidly

And briefly? in your step thus hesitate?
Are you afraid to meet among the good
Incestuous Helen here?

Agamemnon. O! gods of hell!

Iphigeneia. She hath not past the
river.

We may walk
With our hands link'd nor feel our
house's shame.

Agamemnon. Never mayst thou, *Iphi-
geneia*, feel it!

Aulis had no sharp sword, thou wouldst
exclaim,

Greece no avenger—I, her chief so late,
Through Erebus, through Elysium,
writhe beneath it.

Iphigeneia. Come, I have better dia-
dems than those

Of Argos and Mycenai: come away,
And I will weave them for you on the
bank.

You will not look so pale when you have
walk'd

A little in the grove, and have told all
Those sweet fond words the widow sent
her child.

Agamemnon. O Earth! I suffered
less upon thy shores!

(*Aside.*) The bath that bubbled with
my blood, the blows

That spilt it (O worse torture!) must
she know?

Ah! the first woman coming from My-
cenai

Will pine to pour this poison in her ear,
Taunting sad Charon for his slow ad-
vance.

Iphigeneia!

Iphigeneia. Why thus turn away?
Calling me with such fondness! I am
here,

Father! and where you are, will ever be.

Agamemnon. Thou art my child; yes,
yes, thou art my child.

All was not once what all now is! Come
on,

Idol of love and truth! my child! my
child!

(*Alone.*) Fell woman! ever false!
false was thy last

Denunciation, as thy bridal vow;
And yet even that found faith with me!

The dirk
Which sever'd flesh from flesh, where
this hand rests,

Severs not, as thou boastedst in thy
scoffs,

Iphigeneia's love from *Agamemnon*:
The wife's a spark may light, a straw
consume,

The daughter's not her heart's whole
fount hath quench'd,

'Tis worthy of the Gods, and lives for
ever.

Iphigeneia. What spake my father
to the Gods above?

Unworthy am I then to join in prayer?
If, on the last, or any day before,

Of my brief course on earth, I did amiss,
Say it at once, and let me be unblessed ;
But, O my faultless father ! why should
you ?

And shun so my embraces ?

Am I wild

And wandering in my fondness ?

We are shades !

Groan not thus deeply ; blight not thus
the season

Of full-orb'd gladness ! Shades we are
indeed,

But mingled, let us feel it, with the
blessed.

I knew it, but forgot it suddenly,

Altho' I felt it all at your approach.

Look on me ; smile with me at my
illusion.

You are so like what you have ever been
(Except in sorrow !) I might well forget
I could not win you as I used to do.

It was the first embrace since my descent

I ever aim'd at : those who love me live,
Save one, who loves me most, and now
would chide me.

Agamemnon. We want not, O Iphigeneia, we

Want not embrace, nor kiss that cools
the heart

With purity, nor words that more and
Teach what we know, from those we
know, and sink

Often most deeply where they fall most
light.

Time was when for the faintest breath
of thine

Kingdom and life were little,

Iphigeneia. Value them

As little now.

Agamemnon. Were life and kingdom
all !

Iphigeneia. Ah ! by our death many
are sad who loved us.

The little fond Electra, and Orestes

So childish and so bold ! O that mad
boy !

They will be happy too.

Cheer ! king of men !

Cheer ! there are voices, songs—Cheer !
arms advance.

Agamemnon. Come to me, soul of
peace ! These, these alone,

These are not false embraces.

Iphigeneia. Both are happy !

Agamemnon. Freshness breathes
round me from some breeze above.

What are ye, winged ones ! with golden
urns ?

The Hours

(*Descending.*) To each an urn we bring :
Earth's purest gold

Alone can hold

The lymph of the Lethean spring.

We, son of Atreus ! we divide

The dulcet from the bitter tide

That runs athwart the paths of
men.

No more our pinions shalt thou see.
Take comfort ! We have done with
thee,

And must away to earth again.

(*Ascending.*) Where thou art, thou

Of braided brow,

Thou cull'd too soon from Argive bowers,
Where thy sweet voice is heard among

The shades that thrill with choral song,
None can regret the parted Hours.

(*As the Hours depart, the shades of the Argive
warriors who had fought at Troy approach and
chant in chorus the praises of Agamemnon and
his daughter.*)

Chorus of Argives

Maiden ! be thou the spirit that breathes
Triumph and joy into our song !

Wear and bestow these amaranth-
wreaths,

Iphigeneia—they belong

To none but thee and her who reigns
(Less chanted) on our bosky plains.

Semi-chorus

Iphigeneia ! 'tis to thee

Glory we owe and victory.

Clash, men of Argos, clash your
arms,

To martial worth and virgin charms.

Other Semi-chorus

Ye men of Argos ! it was sweet

To roll the fruits of conquest at the feet
Whose whispering sound made bravest
hearts beat fast.

This we have known at home ;

But hither we are come

To crown the king who ruled us first
and last.

Chorus

Father of Argos ! king of men !

We chant the hymn of praise to
thee.

In serried ranks we stand again,

Our glory safe, our country free.

Clash, clash the arms we bravely
bore
Against Scamander's God-defended
shore.

Semi-chorus

Blessed art thou who hast repell'd
Battle's wild fury, Ocean's whelming
foam ;
Blessed o'er all, to have beheld
Wife, children, house avenged, and
peaceful home !

Other Semi-chorus

We, too, thou seest, are now
Among the happy, though the
aged brow
From sorrow for us we could not
protect,
Nor, on the polished granite of the
well
Folding our arms, of spoils and
perils tell,
Nor lift the vase on the lov'd head
erect.

Semi-chorus

What whirling wheels are those
behind ?
What plumes come flaring through
the wind,
Nearer and nearer ? From his
car
He who defied the heaven-born
Powers of war
Pelides springs ! Dust, dust are we
To him, O king, who bends the knee,
Proud only to be first in reverent praise
of thee.

Other Semi-Chorus

Clash, clash the arms ! None other race
Shall see such heroes face to face.
We too have fought ; and they have seen
Nor sea-and gray nor meadow green
Where Dardans stood against their
men.

Clash ! Io Paean ! clash again !
Repinings for lost days repress.
The flames of Troy had cheer'd us less.

Chorus

Hark ! from afar more war-steeds neigh,
Thousands o'er thousands rush this way.
Ajax is yonder ! ay, behold
The radiant arms of Lycian gold !
Arms from admiring valor won,

Tydeus ! and worthy of thy son.
'Tis Ajax wears them now ; for he
Rules over Adria's stormy sea.

He threw them to the friend who lost
(By the dim judgment of the host)
Those wet with tears which Thetis gave
The youth most beauteous of the brave.
In vain ! the insatiate soul would go
For comfort to his peers below.
Clash ! ere we leave them all the plain,
Clash ! Io Paean ! once again.¹ 1836.

THE DEATH OF ARTEMIDORA²

"ARTEMIDORA ! Gods invisible,
While thou art lying faint along the
couch,
Have tied the sandal to thy slender feet
And stand beside thee, ready to convey
Thy weary steps where other rivers flow.
Refreshing shades will waft thy weariness
Away, and voices like thy own come near
And nearer, and solicit an embrace."
Artemidora sigh'd, and would have
pressed
The hand now pressing hers, but was too
weak.
Iris stood over her dark hair unseen
While thus Elpencor spake. He looked into
Eyes that had given light and life ere-
while
To those above them, but now dim with
tears
And wakefulness. Again he spake of joy
Eternal. At that word, that sad word,
joy!
Faithful and fond her bosom heav'd once
more :
Her head fell back ; and now a loud deep
sob
Swell'd thro' the darken'd chamber ;
'twas not hers. 1836.

CORINNA TO TANAGRA, FROM
ATHENS

TANAGRA ! think not I forget
Thy beautifully storied streets ;
Be sure my memory bathes yet
In clear Thermodon, and yet greets
The blithe and liberal shepherd-boy,

¹ See Landon's own comment on this poem, p. 440.

² 1836, in *Pericles and Aspasia*. Slightly altered and included in the *Hellenics*, 1846, etc., from which the present text is taken. See Colvin's comment on the poem, in his *Life of Landon*, pp. 193-4.

Whose sunny bosom swells with joy
When we accept his matted rushes
Upheav'd with sylvan fruit; away he
bounds, and blushes.

A gift I promise: one I see
Which thou with transport wilt receive,
The only proper gift for thee,
Of which no mortal shall bereave
In later times thy mouldering walls,
Until the last old turret falls;
A crown, a crown from Athens won,
A crown no God can wear, beside Lato-
na's son.

There may be cities who refuse
To their own child the honors due,
And look ungentle on the Muse;
But ever shall those cities rue
The dry, unyielding, niggard breast,
Offering no nourishment, no rest,
To that young head which soon shall
rise
Disdainfully, in might and glory, to the
skies.

Sweetly where cavern'd Dirce flows
Do white-arm'd maidens chant my
lay,
Flapping the while with laurel-rose
The honey-gathering tribes away;
And sweetly, sweetly Attic tongues
Lisp your Corinna's early songs;
To her with feet more graceful come
The verses that have dwelt in kindred
breasts at home.

O let thy children lean aslant
Against the tender mother's knee,
And gaze into her face, and want
To know what magic there can be
In words that urge some eyes to dance,
While others as in holy trance
Look up to heaven: be such my praise!
Why linger? I must haste, or lose the
Delphic bays. 1836.

SAPPHO TO HESPERUS

I HAVE beheld thee in the morning hour
A solitary star, with thankless eyes,
Ungrateful as I am! who bade thee rise
When sleep all night had wandered from
my bower.

Can it be true that thou art he
Who shines now above the sea
Amid a thousand, but more bright?

Ah yes! the very same art thou
That heard me then and hearest now...
Thou seemest, star of love! to throb with
light. 1836.

LITTLE AGLAE

TO HER FATHER, ON HER STATUE BEING
CALLED LIKE HER

FATHER! the little girl we see
Is not, I fancy, so like me;
You never hold her on your knee.

When she came home, the other day,
You kiss'd her; but I cannot say
She kiss'd you first and ran away. 1836.

DIRCE

STAND close around, ye Stygian set,
With Dirce in one boat conveyed,
Or Charon, seeing, may forget
That he is old, and she a shade. 1836.

CLEONE TO ASPASIA

WE mind not how the sun in the mid-
sky
Is hastening on; but when the golden
orb
Strikes the extreme of earth, and when
the gulfs
Of air and ocean open to receive him,
Dampness and gloom invade us; then
we think
Ah! thus is it with Youth. Too fast his
feet
Run on for sight; hour follows hour;
fair maid
Succeeds fair maid; bright eyes bestar
his couch;
The cheerful horn awakens him; the
feast,
The revel, the entangling dance, allure,
And voices mellow than the Muse's
own
Heave up his buoyant bosom on their
wave.
A little while, and then—Ah Youth!
Youth! Youth!
Listen not to my words—but stay with
me!
When thou art gone, Life may go too;
the sigh
That rises is for thee, and not for Life. 1836.

ON LUCRETIA BORGIA'S HAIR

BORGIA, thou once wert almost too
 august
 And high for adoration; now thou'rt
 dust;
 All that remains of thee these plaits
 unfold,
 Calm hair meandering in pellucid gold.
 1837.

TO WORDSWORTH

THOSE who have laid the harp aside
 And turn'd to idler things,
 From very restlessness have tried
 The loose and dusty strings,
 And, catching back some favorite strain,
 Run with it o'er the chords again.

But Memory is not a Muse,
 O Wordsworth! though 'tis said
 They all descend from her, and use
 To haunt her fountain-head:
 That other men should work for me
 In the rich mines of Poesie,

Pleases me better than the toil
 Of smoothing under hardened hand,
 With attic emery and oil,
 The shining point for Wisdom's wand,
 Like those thou temperest 'mid the rills
 Descending from thy native hills.
 Without his governance, in vain,
 Manhood is strong, and Youth is bold.

If oftentimes the o'er-piled strain,
 Clogs in the furnace and grows cold
 Beneath his pinions deep and frore,
 And swells and melts and flows no
 more,
 That is because the heat beneath
 Pants in its cavern poorly fed.
 Life springs not from the couch of
 Death,
 Nor Muse nor Grace can raise the
 dead;
 Unturn'd then let the mass remain,
 Intractable to sun or rain.

A marsh, where only flat leaves lie,
 And showing but the broken sky,
 Too surely is the sweetest lay
 That wins the ear and wastes the day,
 Where youthful Fancy pouts alone
 And lets not Wisdom touch her zone.

He who would build his fame up high,
 The rule and plummet must apply.
 Nor say, "I'll do what I have plann'd,"

Before he try if loam or sand
 Be still remaining in the place
 Delved for each polished pillar's base.
 With skilful eye and fit device
 Thou raisest every edifice,
 Whether in sheltered vale it stand,
 Or overlook the Dardan strand,
 Amid the cypresses that mourn
 Laodameia's love forlorn.

We both have run o'er half the space
 Listed for mortal's earthly race;
 We both have crossed life's fervid line,
 And other stars before us shine:
 May they be bright and prosperous
 As those that have been stars for us!
 Our course by Milton's light was sped,
 And Shakespeare shining overhead:
 Chatting on deck was Dryden too,
 The Bacon of the rhyming crew;
 None ever cross'd our mystic sea
 More richly stored with thought than he;
 Tho' never tender nor sublime,
 He wrestles with and conquers Time.
 To learn my lore on Chaucer's knee,
 I left much prouder company;
 Thee gentle Spenser fondly led,
 But me he mostly sent to bed.

I wish them every joy above
 That highly blessed spirits prove,
 Save one: and that too shall be theirs,
 But after many rolling years,
 When 'mid their light thy light appears.
 1833. 1837.

TO JOSEPH ABLETT

LORD of the Celtic dells,
 Where Clwyd listens as his minstrel
 tells
 Of Arthur, or Pendragon, or perchance
 The plumes of flashy France,
 Or, in dark region far across the main,
 Far as Grenada in the world of Spain,

Warriors untold to Saxon ear,
 Until their steel-clad spirits reappear;
 How happy were the hours that held
 Thy friend (long absent from his native
 home)
 Amid thy scenes with thee! how wide
 afield
 From all past cares and all to come!

What hath Ambition's feverish grasp
 what hath
 Inconstant Fortune, panting Hope;
 What Genius, that should cope

With the heart-whispers in that path
Winding so idly, where the idler stream
Flings at the white-haired poplars
gleam for gleam?

Ablett! of all the days
My sixty summers ever knew,
Pleasant as there have been no few,
Memory not one surveys
Like those we spent together. Wisely
spent
Are they alone that leave the soul content.

Together we have visited the men
Whom Pictish pirates vainly would
have drowned;
Ah, shall we ever clasp the hand again
That gave the British harp its truest
sound?
Live, Derwent's guest! and thou by
Grasmere's springs!
Serene creators of immortal things.¹

And live too thou for happier days
Whom Dryden's force and Spenser's fays
Have heart and soul possess'd:²
Growl in Grim London he who will,
Revisit thou Maiano's hill,
And swell with pride his sunburnt
breast.

Old Redi in his easy-chair
With varied chant awaits thee there,
And here are voices in the grove
Aside my house, that make me think
Bacchus is coming down to drink
To Ariadne's love.

But whither am I borne away
From thee, to whom began my lay?
Courage! I am not yet quite lost;
I stepped aside to greet my friends;
Believe me, soon the greeting ends,
I know but three or four at most.

Deem not that Time hath borne too hard
Upon the fortunes of thy bard,

Leaving me only three or four:
'Tis my old number; dost thou start
At such a tale? in what man's heart
Is there fireside for more?

I never courted friends or Fame;
She pouted at me long, at last she came,
And threw her arms around my neck
and said,

"Take what hath been for years delay'd,
And fear not that the leaves will fall
One hour the earlier from thy coronal."

Ablett! thou knowest with what even
hand
I waved away the offer'd seat
Among the clambering, clattering, stilt-
ed great,
The rulers of our land;
Nor crowds nor kings can lift me up,
Nor sweeten Pleasure's purer cup.

Thou knowest how, and why, are dear
to me
My citron groves of Fiesole,
My chirping Affrico, my beechwood
nook,
My Naiads, with feet only in the brook,
Which runs away and giggles in their
faces,
Yet there they sit, nor sigh for other
places.

'Tis not Pelasgian wall,
By him made sacred whom alone
'Twere not profane to call
The bard divine, nor (thrown
Far under me) Valdarno, nor the crest
Of Vallombrosa in the crimson east.

Here can I sit or roam at will:
Few trouble me, few wish me ill,
Few come across me, few too near;
Here all my wishes make their stand;
Here ask I no one's voice or hand;
Scornful of favor, ignorant of fear.

Yon vine upon the maple bough
Flouts at the hearty wheat below;
Away her venal wines the wise man
sends,
While those of lower stem he brings
From inmost treasure vault, and sings
Their worth and age among his chosen
friends.

Behold our Earth, most nigh the sun
Her zone least opens to the genial heat,
But farther off her veins more freely
run:

'Tis thus with those who whirl about
the great; [note
The nearest shrink and shiver, we re-
May open-breasted blow the pastoral oat.
1834. 1837.¹

¹ This poem had been printed in an earlier form, containing lines to Coleridge, in Leigh Hunt's *London Journal*, December 3, 1834. See Colvin's *Life of Landor*, note to p. 142.

¹ Southey and Wordsworth. ² Leigh Hunt.

TO MARY LAMB

COMFORT thee, O thou mourner, yet awhile !

Again shall Elia's smile

Refresh thy heart, where heart can ache no more.

What is it we deplore ?

He leaves behind him, freed from griefs and years,

Far worthier things than tears.

The love of friends without a single foe : Unequalled lot below !

His gentle soul, his genius, these are thine ;

For these dost thou repine ?

He may have left the lowly walks of men ;

Left them he has ; what then ?

Are not his footsteps followed by the eyes

Of all the good and wise ?

Tho' the warm day is over, yet they seek

Upon the lofty peak

Of his pure mind the roseate light that glows

O'er death's perennial snows.

Behold him ! from the region of the blessed

He speaks : he bids thee rest.

1834. 1837.

ON HIS OWN IPHIGENEIA AND AGAMEMNON

From eve to morn, from morn to parting night

Father and daughter stood within my sight. [they said,

I felt the looks they gave, the words And reconducted each serener shade.

Ever shall these to me be well-spent days,

Sweet fell the tears upon them, sweet the praise. [throne,

Far from the footstool of the tragic I am tragedian in that scene alone.

1837.

FAREWELL TO ITALY

I LEAVE thee, beauteous Italy ! no more From the high terraces, at eventide, To look supine into thy depths of sky, Thy golden moon between the cliff and me,

Or thy dark spires of fretted cypresses Bordering the channel of the milky-way. Fiesole and Valdarno must be dreams

Hereafter, and my own lost Affrico

Murmur to me but in the poet's song.

I did believe (what have I not believed?)

Weary with age, but unoppressed by pain,

To close in thy soft clime my quiet day And rest my bones in the Mimosa's shade.

Hope ! Hope ! few ever cherished thee so little ;

Few are the heads thou hast so rarely raised ; [well.

But thou didst promise this, and all was

For we are fond of thinking where to lie

When every pulse hath ceased, when the lone heart

Can lift no aspiration—reasoning

As if the sight were unimpaired by death,

Were unobstructed by the coffin-lid,

And the sun cheered corruption ! Over all

The smiles of nature shed a potent charm,

And light us to our chamber at the grave. 1835. 1846.

WHY, WHY REPINE

WHY, why repine, my pensive friend,

At pleasures slipped away ?

Some the stern Fates will never lend,

And all refuse to stay.

I see the rainbow in the sky,

The dew upon the grass,

I see them, and I ask not why

They glimmer or they pass.

With folded arms I linger not

To call them back ; 'twere vain ;

In this, or in some other spot,

I know they'll shine again.

1846.

MOTHER, I CANNOT MIND MY WHEEL

MOTHER, I cannot mind my wheel ;

My fingers ache, my lips are dry :

Oh ! if you felt the pain I feel !

But oh, who ever felt as I ?

No longer could I doubt him true—

All other men may use deceit ;

He always said my eyes were blue,

And often swore my lips were sweet 1846.

TO A BRIDE

FEBRUARY 17, 1846¹

A STILL, serene, soft day; enough of sun
 To wreathe the cottage smoke like pine-
 tree snow,
 Whiter than those white flowers the
 bride-maids wore;
 Upon the silent boughs the lissom air
 Rested; and, only when it went, they
 moved,
 Nor more than under linnet springing off.
 Such was the wedding morn: the joy-
 ous Year
 Leapt over March and April up to May.
 Regent of rising and of ebbing hearts,
 Thyself borne on in cool serenity,
 All heaven around and bending over
 thee,
 All earth below and watchful of thy
 course!
 Well hast thou chosen, after long demur
 To aspirations from more realms than
 one.
 Peace be with those thou leavest! peace
 with thee!
 Is that enough to wish thee? not enough,
 But very much: for Love himself feels
 pain,
 While brighter plumage shoots, to shed
 last year's;
 And one at home (how dear that one!)
 recalls
 Thy name, and thou recallest one at
 home.
 Yet turn not back thine eyes; the hour
 of tears
 Is over; nor believe thou that Romance
 Closes against pure Faith her rich do-
 main.
 Shall only blossoms flourish there?
 Arise,
 Far-sighted bride! look forward!
 clearer views
 And higher hopes lie under calmer skies.
 Fortune in vain call'd out to thee; in
 vain
 Rays from high regions darted; Wit
 pour'd out
 His sparkling treasures; Wisdom laid
 his crown
 Of richer jewels at thy reckless feet.
 Well hast thou chosen. I repeat the
 words,

¹ For the marriage of the daughter of Rose Aymer's half-sister. Called by Landor "my tenderest lay." See *The Three Roses*, p. 457, and note there.

Adding as true ones, not untold before,
 That incense must have fire for its as-
 cent,
 Else 'tis inert and can not reach the idol.
 Youth is the sole equivalent of youth.
 Enjoy it while it lasts; and last it will;
 Love can prolong it in despite of Years.
 1846.

LYRICS

"Do you remember me? or are you
 proud?"
 Lightly advancing thro' her star-trimm'd
 crowd,
 Ianthe said, and looked into my eyes.
 "A *yes*, a *yes*, to both: for Memory
 Where you but once have been must ever
 be,
 And at your voice Pride from his
 throne must rise."

No, my own love of other years!
 No, it must never be.
 Much rests with you that yet endears,
 Alas! but what with me?
 Could those bright years o'er me revolve
 So gay, o'er you so fair,
 The pearl of life we would dissolve
 And each the cup might share.
 You show that truth can ne'er decay,
 Whatever fate befalls;
 I, that the myrtle and the bay
 Shoot fresh on ruin'd walls.

ONE year ago my path was green,
 My footstep light, my brow serene;
 Alas! and could it have been so
 One year ago?

There is a love that is to last
 When the hot days of youth are past:
 Such love did a sweet maid bestow
 One year ago.

I took a leaflet from her braid
 And gave it to another maid.
 Love! broken should have been thy bow
 One year ago.

YES; I write verses now and then,
 But blunt and flaccid is my pen,
 No longer talked of by young men
 As rather clever:

In the last quarter are my eyes,
 You see it by their form and size ;
 Is it not time then to be wise ?
 Or now or never.

Fairest that ever sprang from Eve !
 While Time allows the short reprieve,
 Just look at me ! would you believe
 'Twas once a lover ?
 I cannot clear the five-bar gate,
 But, trying first its timbers' state,
 Climb stiffly up, take breath, and wait
 To trundle over.

Thro' gallopade I cannot swing
 The entangling blooms of Beauty's
 spring :
 I cannot say the tender thing,
 Be't true or false,
 And am beginning to opine
 Those girls are only half-divine
 Whose waists yon wicked boys entwine
 In giddy waltz.

I fear that arm above that shoulder,
 I wish them wiser, graver, older,
 Sedater, and no harm if colder
 And panting less.
 Ah ! people were not half so wild
 In former days, when, starchy mild,
 Upon her high-heel'd Essex smiled
 The brave Queen Bess.

With rosy hand a little girl pressed down
 A boss of fresh-cull'd cowslips in a rill :
 Often as they sprang up again, a frown
 Show'd she disliked resistance to her
 will :
 But when they droop'd their heads and
 shone much less,
 She shook them to and fro, and threw
 them by,
 And tripped away. "Ye loathe the
 heaviness
 Ye love to cause, my little girls !"
 thought I,
 "And what had shone for you, by you
 must die."

You smiled, you spoke, and I believed,
 By every word and smile deceived.
 Another man would hope no more ;
 Nor hope I what I hoped before :
 But let not this last wish be vain ;
 Deceive, deceive me once again !

Remain, ah not in youth alone,
 Tho' youth, where you are, long will
 stay,
 But when my summer days are gone,
 And my autumnal haste away.
 "*Can I be always by your side ?*"
 No ; but the hours you can, you must,
 Nor rise at Death's approaching stride,
 Nor go when dust is gone to dust.

Soon, O Ianthe ! life is o'er,
 And sooner beauty's heavenly smile :
 Grant only (and I ask no more),
 Let love remain that little while.

TO A CYCLAMEN

I come to visit thee again,
 My little flowerless cyclamen ;
 To touch the hand, almost to press,
 That cheered thee in thy loneliness.
 What could thy careful guardian find
 Of thee in form, of me in mind,
 What is there in us rich or rare,
 To make us claim a moment's care ?
 Unworthy to be so caressed,
 We are but withering leaves at best.

Give me the eyes that look on mine,
 And, when they see them dimly shine,
 Are moister than they were.
 Give me the eyes that fain would find
 Some relics of a youthful mind
 Amid the wrecks of care.
 Give me the eyes that catch at last
 A few faint glimpses of the past,
 And, like the arkite dove,
 Bring back a long-lost olive-bough,
 And can discover even now
 A heart that once could love.

Twenty years hence my eyes may grow
 If not quite dim, yet rather so,
 Still yours from others they shall know
 Twenty years hence

Twenty years hence tho' it may hap
 That I be call'd to take a nap
 In a cool cell where thunder-clap
 Was never heard,

There breathe but o'er my arch of grass
 A not too sadly sigh'd *Alas*,
 And I shall catch, ere you can pass,
 That winged word.

Proud word you never spoke, but you
 will speak
 Four not exempt from pride some
 future day.
 Resting on one white hand a warm wet
 cheek
 Over my open volume you will say,
 "This man loved *me!*" then rise and
 trip away.

Alas, how soon the hours are over
 Counted us out to play the lover!
 And how much narrower is the stage
 Allotted us to play the sage!
 But when we play the fool, how wide,
 The theatre expands! beside,
 How long the audience sits before us!
 How many prompters! what a chorus!
 1846.

QUATRAINS

On the smooth brow and clustering hair
 Myrtle and rose! your wreath com-
 bine,
 The duller olive I would wear,
 Its constancy, its peace, be mine.

My hopes retire; my wishes as before
 Struggle to find their resting-place in
 vain;
 The ebbing sea thus beats against the
 shore;
 The shore repels it; it returns again.

Various the roads of life; in one
 All terminate, one lonely way.
 We go; and "Is he gone?"
 Is all our best friends say.

Is it not better at an early hour
 In its calm cell to rest the weary
 head,
 While birds are singing and while
 blossoms the bower,
 Than sit the fire out and go starv'd to
 bed?
 1846.

I KNOW NOT WHETHER I AM
PROUD

I KNOW not whether I am proud,
 But this I know, I hate the crowd:
 Therefore pray let me disengage
 My verses from the motley page,
 Where others far more sure to please
 Pour out their choral song with ease.

And yet perhaps, if some should tire
 With too much froth or too much fire,
 There is an ear that may incline
 Even to words so dull as mine.

1846.

THE DAY RETURNS, MY NATAL
DAY

THE day returns, my natal day,
 Borne on the storm and pale with
 snow,
 And seems to ask me why I stay,
 Stricken by Time and bowed by Woe.

Many were once the friends who came
 To wish me joy; and there are some
 Who wish it now; but not the same:
 They are whence friend can never
 come.

Nor are they you my love watched o'er
 Cradled in innocence and sleep;
 You smile into my eyes no more,
 Nor see the bitter tears they weep.
 1846.

HOW MANY VOICES GAILY SING

How many voices gaily sing,
 "O happy morn, O happy spring
 Of life!" Meanwhile there comes o'er
 me
 A softer voice from Memory,
 And says, "If loves and hopes have
 flown
 With years, think too what griefs are
 gone!"
 1846.

TO ROBERT BROWNING

THERE is delight in singing, tho' none
 hear
 Beside the singer; and there is delight
 In praising, tho' the praiser sit alone
 And see the prais'd far off him, far
 above.
 Shakespeare is not our poet, but the
 world's,

Therefore on him no speech! and brief
 for thee,
 Browning! Since Chaucer was alive
 and hale,
 No man hath walked along our roads
 with step
 So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue
 So varied in discourse. But warmer
 climes
 Give brighter plumage, stronger wing:
 the breeze
 Of Alpine heights thou playest with,
 borne on
 Beyond Sorrento and Analfi, where
 The Siren waits thee, singing song for
 song. 1846.

ON THE HELLENICS¹

COME back, ye wandering Muses, come
 back home,
 Ye seem to have forgotten where it lies:
 Come, let us walk upon the silent sands
 Of Simois, where deep footmarks show
 long strides;
 Thence we may mount, perhaps, to
 higher ground,
 Where Aphroditè from Athenè won
 The golden apple, and from Herè too,
 And happy Ares shouted far below.
 Or would ye rather choose the grassy
 vale
 Where flows Anapos thro' anemones,
 Hyacinths, and narcissuses, that bend
 To show their rival beauty in the
 stream?
 Bring with you each her lyre, and each
 in turn
 Temper a graver with a lighter song.
 1847.

THRASYMEDES AND EUNOE

WHO will away to Athens with me?
 who
 Loves choral songs and maidens crown'd
 with flowers,
 Unenvious? mount the pinnace; hoist
 the sail.
 I promise ye, as many as are here,

¹ Prefixed to the second edition of Landor's *Hellenics*, 1847. It is here given slightly out of the exact chronological order, that it may stand as an introduction to the chief poems from the *Hellenics*, those of 1846 as well as those of 1847.

Other poems of Landor's, such as *The Death of Artemidora*, *Cleone to Aspasia*, *The Shades of Agamemnon* and *Iphigenia*, etc., though originally published in other collections, and therefore not given here with the *Hellenics*, were ultimately included by Landor among them.

Ye shall not, while ye tarry with me,
 taste
 From unrisn barrel the diluted wine
 Of a low vineyard or a plant ill-pruned,
 But such as anciently the Ægean isles
 Pour'd in libation at their solemn feasts:
 And the same goblets shall ye grasp,
 embossed
 With no vile figures of loose languid
 boors,
 But such as gods have lived with and
 have led.
 The sea smiles bright before us. What
 white sail
 Plays yonder? What pursues it? Like
 two hawks
 Away they fly. Let us away in time
 To overtake them. Are they menaces
 We hear? And shall the strong repulse
 the weak,
 Enraged at her defender? Hippias!
 Art thou the man? 'Twas Hippias. He
 had found
 His sister borne from the Cecropian port
 By Thrasymedes. And reluctantly?
 Ask, ask the maiden; I have no reply.
 "Brother! O brother Hippias! O, if
 love,
 If pity, ever touch'd thy breast, forbear!
 Strike not the brave, the gentle, the be-
 loved,
 My Thrasymedes, with his cloak alone
 Protecting his own head and mine from
 harm."
 "Didst thou not once before," cried
 Hippias,
 Regardless of his sister, hoarse with
 wrath
 At Thrasymedes, "didst not thou, dog-
 eyed,
 Dare, as she walk'd up to the Parthenon,
 On the most holy of all holy days,
 In sight of all the city, dare to kiss
 Her maiden cheek?"
 "Ay, before all the gods,
 Ay, before Pallas, before Artemis,
 Ay, before Aphroditè, before Herè,
 I dared; and dare again. Arise, my
 spouse!
 Arise! and let my lips quaff purity
 From thy fair open brow."
 The sword was up,
 And yet he kiss'd her twice. Some God
 withheld
 The arm of Hippias; his proud blood
 seeth'd slower
 And smote his breast less angrily; he
 laid [spake thus:
 His hand on the white shoulder, and

"Ye must return with me. A second time

Offended, will our sire Peisistratos
Pardon the affront? Thou shouldst
have ask'd thyself

This question ere the sail first flapp'd the
mast."

"Already thou hast taken life from me;
Put up thy sword," said the sad youth,
his eyes

Sparkling; but whether love or rage or
grief

They sparkled with, the Gods alone could
see.

Piræus they re-entered, and their ship
Drove up the little waves against the
quay,

Whence was thrown out a rope from one
above,

And Hippias caught it. From the virgin's
waist

Her lover dropped his arm, and blushed
to think

He had retain'd it there in sight of rude
Irreverent men: he led her forth, nor
spake.

Hippias walked silent too, until they
reached

The mansion of Peisistratos her sire.

Serenely in his sternness did the prince
Look on them both awhile: they saw not
him,

For both had cast their eyes upon the
ground.

"Are these the pirates thou hast taken,
son?"

Said he, "Worse, father! worse than
pirates they,

Who thus abuse thy patience, thus abuse
Thy pardon, thus abuse the holy rites
Twice over."

"Well hast thou performed thy duty,"
Firmly and gravely said Peisistratos.

"Nothing then, rash young man! could
turn thy heart

From Eunoe, my daughter?"

"Nothing, sir,

Shall ever turn it. I can die but once
And love but once. O Eunoe! farewell!"

"Nay, she shall see what thou canst bear
for her."

"O father! shut me in my chamber,
shut me

In my poor mother's tomb, dead or alive,
But never let me see what he can bear;
I know how much that is, when borne
for me."

"Not yet: come on. And lag not thou
behind,

Pirate of virgin and of princely hearts!
Before the people and before the Goddess
Thou hadst evinced the madness of thy
passion,

And now wouldest bear from home and
plenteousness

To poverty and exile this my child."

Then shuddered Thrasymedes, and ex-
claim'd,

"I see my crime; I saw it not before.
The daughter of Peisistratos was born

Neither for exile nor for poverty,
Ah! nor for me!" He would have wept,

but one
Might see him, and weep worse. The
prince unmoved

Strode on, and said, "To-morrow shall
the people,

All who beheld thy trespasses, behold
The justice of Peisistratos, the love

He bears his daughter, and the reverence
In which he holds the highest law of

God."

He spake; and on the morrow they
were one. 1846.

IPHIGENEIA AND AGAMEMNON

IPHIGENEIA, when she heard her doom
At Aulis, and when all beside the King
Had gone away, took his right hand, and
said,

"O father! I am young and very happy.
I do not think the pious Calchas heard
Distinctly what the Goddess spake.

Old-age
Obscures the senses. If my nurse, who
knew

My voice so well, sometimes misunder-
stood

While I was resting on her knee both
arms

And hitting it to make her mind my
words,

And looking in her face, and she in mine,
Might he not also hear one word amiss,

Spoken from so far off, even from Olym-
pus?"

The father placed his cheek upon her
head,

And tears dropped down it, but the king
of men

Replied not. Then the maiden spake
once more. [thou not

"O father! sayst thou nothing? Hear'st
Me, whom thou ever hast, until this hour,

Listened to fondly, and awakened me
To hear my voice amid the voice of

birds,

When it was inarticulate as theirs,
 And the down deadened it within the
 nest?"

He moved her gently from him, silent
 still,
 And this, and this alone, brought tears
 from her.

Although she saw fate nearer: then with
 sighs,
 "I thought to have laid down my hair
 before
 Benignant Artemis, and not have
 dimmed
 Her polished altar with my virgin blood;
 I thought to have selected the white
 flowers
 To please the Nymphs, and to have
 asked of each
 By name, and with no sorrowful regret,
 Whether, since both my parents willed
 the change,
 I might at Hymen's feet bend my clipped
 brow;
 And (after those who mind us girls the
 most,)
 Adore our own Athena, that she would
 Regard me mildly with her azure eyes,
 But father! to see you no more, and see
 Your love, O father! go ere I am
 gone . . ."

Gently he moved her off, and drew her
 back,
 Bending his lofty head far over hers,
 And the dark depths of nature heaved
 and burst.

He turn'd away; not far, but silent
 still.

She now first shuddered; for in him, so
 nigh,
 So long a silence seemed the approach of
 death,
 And like it. Once again she raised her
 voice.

"O father! if the ships are now de-
 tained,
 And all your vows move not the Gods
 above,
 When the knife strikes me there will be
 one prayer
 The less to them: and purer can there
 be
 Any, or more fervent than the daugh-
 ter's prayer
 For her dear father's safety and suc-
 cess?" [resolve.

A groan that shook him shook not his
 An aged man now entered, and without
 One word, stepped slowly on, and took
 the wrist

Of the pale maiden. She looked up and
 saw
 The fillet of the priest and calm cold
 eyes.
 Then turned she where her parent
 stood, and cried
 "O father! grieve no more: the ships
 can sail." 1846.

THE HAMADRYAD¹

RHAICOS was born amid the hills where-
 from
 Gnidos the light of Caria is discern'd,
 And small are the white-crested that
 play near,
 And smaller onward are the purple
 waves.

Thence festal choirs were visible, all
 crown'd
 With rose and myrtle if they were in-
 born;
 If from Pandion sprang they, on the
 coast
 Where stern Athenè raised her citadel,
 Then olive was entwined with violets
 Cluster'd in bosses, regular and large.
 For various men wore various coronals;
 But one was their devotion; 'twas to
 her
 Whose laws all follow, her whose smile
 withdraws
 The sword from Ares, thunderbolt from
 Zeus,
 And whom in his chill caves the mu-
 table
 Of mind, Poseidon, the sea-king, re-
 veres,
 And whom his brother, stubborn Dis,
 hath pray'd
 To turn in pity the averted cheek
 Of her he bore away, with promises,
 Nay, with loud oath before dread Styx
 itself,
 To give her daily more and sweeter
 flowers
 Than he made drop from her on Enna's
 dell.

Rhaicos was looking from his father's
 door
 At the long trains that hastened to the
 town
 From all the valleys, like bright rivu-
 lets
 Gurgling with gladness, wave outrun-
 ning wave,

¹ Compare Lowell's poem, *Rhæcus*, which gives
 a somewhat different version of the same story

And thought it hard he might not also
go

And offer up one prayer, and press one
hand,

He knew not whose. The father call'd
him in,

And said, "Son Rhaicos! those are idle
games;

Long enough I have lived to find them
so."

And ere he ended sighed; as old men do
Always, to think how idle such games
are.

"I have not yet," thought Rhaicos in
his heart,

And wanted proof.

"Suppose thou go and help
Echeion at the hill, to bark yon oak

And lop its branches off, before we
delve

About the trunk and ply the root with
axe:

This we may do in winter."

Rhaicos went;
For thence he could see farther, and see
more

Of those who hurried to the city-gate.
Echeion he found there with naked arm
Swart-hair'd, strong-sinew'd, and his
eyes intent

Upon the place where first the axe
should fall:

He held it upright. "There are bees
about,

Or wasps, or hornets," said the cautious
eld,

"Look sharp, O son of Thallinos!" The
youth

Inclined his ear, afar, and warily,
And cavern'd in his hand. He heard a
buzz

At first, and then the sound grew soft
and clear,

And then divided into what seem'd tune,
And there were words upon it, plaintive
words.

He turn'd, and said, "Echeion! do not
strike

That tree: it must be hollow; for some
god

Speaks from within. Come thyself
near." Again

Both turn'd toward it: and behold!
there sat

Upon the moss below, with her two
palms

Pressing it, on each side, a maid in
form. [pale

Downcast were her long eyelashes, and

Her cheek, but never mountain-ash dis-
play'd

Berries of color like her lip so pure,
Nor were the anemones about her hair
Soft, smooth and wavering like the face
beneath.

"What dost thou here?" Echeion, half-
afraid,

Half-angry cried. She lifted up her eyes,
But nothing spake she. Rhaicos drew
one step

Backward, for fear came likewise over
him,

But not such fear: he panted, gasp'd,
drew in

His breath, and would have turn'd it
into words,

But could not into one.

"O send away
That sad old man!" said she. The old
man went

Without a warning from his master's
son,

Glad to escape, for sorely he now fear'd,
And the axe shone behind him in their
eyes.

Hamad. And wouldst thou too shed
the most innocent

Of blood? No vow demands it; no god
wills

The oak to bleed.

Rhaicos. Who art thou? whence?
why here?

And whither wouldst thou go? Among
the rob'd

In white or saffron, or the hue that most
Resembles dawn or the clear sky, is none
Array'd as thou art. What so beautiful
As that gray robe which clings about
thee close,

Like moss to stones adhering, leaves to
trees,

Yet lets thy bosom rise and fall in turn,
As, touch'd by zephyrs, fall and rise the
boughs

Of graceful platan by the river-side?

Hamad. Lovest thou well thy father's
house?

Rhaicos. Indeed
I love it, well I love it, yet would leave
For thine, where'er it be, my father's
house,

With all the marks upon the door, that
show

My growth at every birthday since the
third,

And all the charms, o'erpowering evil
eyes,

My mother nail'd for me against my bed,

And the Cydonian bow (which thou shalt see)

Won in my race last spring from Euty-chos.

Hamad. Bethink thee what it is to leave a home

Thou never yet hast left, one night, one day.

Rhaicos. No, 'tis not hard to leave it; 'tis not hard

To leave, O maiden, that paternal home, If there be one on earth whom we may love

First, last, for ever; one who says that she

Will love for ever too. To say which word,

Only to say it, surely is enough . . . It shows such kindness . . . if 'twere possible

We at the moment think she would indeed.

Hamad. Who taught thee all this folly at thy age?

Rhaicos. I have seen lovers and have learned to love.

Hamad. But wilt thou spare the tree?

Rhaicos. My father wants The bark; the tree may hold its place awhile.

Hamad. Awhile! thy father numbers then my days?

Rhaicos. Are there no others where the moss beneath

Is quite as tufty? Who would send thee forth

Or ask thee why thou tarriest? Is thy flock

Anywhere near?

Hamad. I have no flock: I kill Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that feels the air,

The sun, the dew. Why should the beautiful

(And thou art beautiful) disturb the source

Whence springs all beauty? Hast thou never heard

Of Hamadryads?

Rhaicos. Heard of them I have: Tell me some tale about them. May I sit

Beside thy feet? Art thou not tired? The herbs

Are very soft; I will not come too nigh; Do but sit there, nor tremble so, nor doubt.

[plore] Stay, stay an instant: let me first ex-

If any acorn of last year be left Within it; thy thin robe too ill protects Thy dainty limbs against the harm one small

Acorn may do. Here's none. Another day

Trust me; till then let me sit opposite.

Hamad. I seat me; be thou seated, and content.

Rhaicos. O sight for gods! ye men below! adore

The Aphroditè. Is she there below?

Or sits she here before me? as she sate

Before the shepherd on those heights that shade

The Hellespont, and brought his kindred woe.

Hamad. Reverence the higher Powers; nor deem amiss

Of her who pleads to thee, and would repay—

Ask not how much—but very much. Rise not;

No, *Rhaicos*, no! Without the nuptial vow

Love is unholy. Swear to me that none Of mortal maids shall ever taste thy kiss,

Then take thou mine; then take it, not before.

Rhaicos. Hearken, all gods above! O Aphroditè!

O Here! Let my vow be ratified!

But wilt thou come into my father's house?

Hamad. Nay: and of mine I cannot give thee part.

Rhaicos. Where is it?

Hamad. In this oak.

Rhaicos. Ay; now begins The tale of Hamadryad; tell it through.

Hamad. Pray of thy father never to cut down

My tree; and promise him, as well thou mayst,

That every year he shall receive from me More honey than will buy him nine fat sheep,

More wax than he will burn to all the gods.

Why fallest thou upon thy face? Some thorn

May scratch it, rash young man! Rise up; for shame!

Rhaicos. For shame I can not rise. O pity me!

I dare not sue for love. . . but do not hate! Let me once more behold thee. . . not once

more, [loved!]

But many days: let me love on. . . un-

I aimed too high : on my head the bolt
Falls back, and pierces to the very
brain.

Hamad. Go.. rather go, than make
me say I love.

Rhaicos. If happiness is immortality,
(And whence enjoy it else the gods
above?)

I am immortal too : my vow is heard :
Hark ! on the left . . Nay, turn not from
me now,

I claim my kiss.

Hamad. Do men take first, then
claim?

Do thus the seasons run their course with
them?

Her lips were seal'd, her head sank on
his breast.

'Tis said that laughs were heard within
the wood :

But who should hear them ? . . and whose
laughs ? and why ?

Savory was the smell, and long past
noon,

Thallinos ! in thy house : for marjoram,
Basil and mint, and thyme and rose-
mary,

Were sprinkled on the kid's wellroasted
length,

Awaiting Rhaicos. Home he came at
last,

Not hungry, but pretending hunger keen,
With head and eyes just o'er the maple
plate.

"Thou seest but badly, coming from the
sun,

Boy Rhaicos !" said the father. "That
oak's bark

Must have been tough, with little sap
between ;

It ought to run ; but it and I are old."

Rhaicos, although each morsel of the
bread

Increased by chewing, and the meat grew
cold

And tasteless to his palate, took a draught
Of gold-bright wine, which, thirsty as he
was,

He thought not of until his father fill'd

The cup, averring water was amiss,
But wine had been at all times pour'd on

kid,

It was religion.

He thus fortified

Said, not quite boldly, and not quite
abashed,

"Father, that oak is Zeus's own ; that
oak

Year after year will bring thee wealth
from wax

And honey. There is one who fears the
gods

And the gods love—that one"

(He blush'd, nor said

What one)

"Has promised this, and may do more.
Thou hast not many moons to wait until

The bees have done their best ; if then
there come

Nor wax nor honey, let the tree be
hewn."

"Zeus hath bestow'd on thee a
prudent mind,"

Said the glad sire ; "but look thou often
there,

And gather all the honey thou canst find
In every crevice, over and above

What has been promised ; would they
reckon that?"

Rhaicos went daily ; but the nymph as
oft,

Invisible. To play at love, she knew,
Stopping its breathings when it breathes

most soft,

Is sweeter than to play on any pipe.

She play'd on his : she fed upon his sighs ;
They pleased her when they gently

waved her hair,

Cooling the pulses of her purple veins,
And when her absence brought them

out, they pleased.

Even among the fondest of them all,

What mortal or immortal maid is more
Content with giving happiness than

pain?

One day he was returning from the wood
Despondently. She pitied him, and said

"Come back !" and twined her fingers in
the hem

Above his shoulder. Then she led his
steps

To a cool rill that ran o'er level sand

Through lentisk and through oleander,
there

Bathed she his feet, lifting them on her
lap

When bathed, and drying them in both
her hands.

He dared complain ; for those who most
are loved

Most dare it ; but not harsh was his
complaint.

"O thou inconstant !" said he, "if stern
law

Bind thee, or will, stronger than sternest
law

O, let me know henceforward when to

The fruit of love that grows for me but here."

He spake ; and pluck'd it from its pliant stem.

"Impatient Rhaicos ! Why thus intercept

The answer I would give ? There is a bee Whom I have fed, a bee who knows my thoughts

And executes my wishes : I will send That messenger. If ever thou art false, Drawn by another, own it not, but drive My bee away ; then shall I know my fate, And—for thou must be wretched—weep at thine.

But often as my heart persuades to lay Its cares on thine and throb itself to rest, Expect her with thee, whether it be morn

Or eve, at any time when woods are safe."

Day after day the Hours beheld them blessed,

And season after season : years had past, Blessed were they still. He who asserts that Love

Ever is sated of sweet things, the same Sweet things he fretted for in earlier days,

Never, by Zeus ! loved he a Hamadryad. The nights had now grown longer, and perhaps

The Hamadryads find them lone and dull

Among their woods ; one did, alas ! She called

Her faithful bee : 't was when all bees should sleep,

And all did sleep but hers. She was sent forth

To bring that light which never wintry blast

Blows out, nor rain nor snow extinguishes,

The light that shines from loving eyes upon

Eyes that love back, till they can see no more.

Rhaicos was sitting at his father's hearth :

Between them stood the table, not o'er-spread

With fruits which autumn now profusely bore,

Nor anise cakes, nor odorous wine ; but there

The draft-board was expanded ; at which game

Triumphant sat old Thallinos ; the son Was puzzled, vexed, discomfited, distraught.

A buzz was at his ear : up went his hand,

And it was heard no longer. The poor bee

Return'd, (but not until the morn shone bright)

And found the Hamadryad with her head

Upon her aching wrist, and showed one wing

Half-broken off, the other's meshes marr'd,

And there were bruises which no eye could see

Saving a Hamadryad's.

At this sight

Down fell the languid brow, both hands fell down,

A shriek was carried to the ancient hall Of Thallinos : he heard it not : his son Heard it, and ran forthwith into the wood.

No bark was on the tree, no leaf was green,

The trunk was riven through. From that day forth

Nor word nor whisper sooth'd his ear, nor sound

Even of insect wing ; but loud laments The woodmen and the shepherds one long year

Heard day and night ; for Rhaicos would not quit

The solitary place, but moan'd and died.

Hence milk and honey wonder not, O guest,

To find set duly on the hollow stone.

1846.

ACON AND RHODOPÉ ; OR, INCONSTANCY

(A Sequel)

THE Year's twelve daughters had in turn gone by,

Of measured pace though varying mien all twelve,

Some froward, some sedater, some adorn'd

For festival, some reckless of attire.

The snow had left the mountain-top ; fresh flowers

Had withered in the meadow ; fig and prune

Hung wrinkling ; the last apple glow'd
amid
Its freckled leaves ; and weary oxen
blink'd
Between the trodden corn and twisted
vine,
Under whose bunches stood the empty
crate,
To creak ere long beneath them carried
home.
This was the season when twelve months
before,
O gentle Hamadryad, true to love !
Thy mansion, thy dim mansion in the
wood
Was blasted and laid desolate ; but none
Dared violate its precincts, none dared
pluck
The moss beneath it, which alone re-
main'd
Of what was thine.

Old Thallinos sat mute
In solitary sadness. The strange tale
(Not until Rhaicos died, but then the
whole)
Echeion had related, whom no force
Could ever make look back upon the
oaks.
The father said, "Echeion ! thou must
weigh,
Carefully, and with steady hand, enough
(Although no longer comes the store as
once !)
Of wax to burn all day and night upon
That hollow stone where milk and honey
lie :
So may the gods, so may the dead, be
pleas'd !"
Thallinos bore it thither in the morn,
And lighted it and left it.

First of those
Who visited upon this solemn day
The Hamadryad's oak, were Rhodopé
And Acon ; of one age, one hope, one
trust.
Graceful was she as was the nymph
whose fate
She sorrowed for : he slender, pale, and
first
Lapp'd by the flame of love : his father's
lands [afar.
Were fertile, herds lowed over them
Now stood the two aside the hollow stone
And look'd with steadfast eyes toward
the oak
Shivered and black and bare.

"May never we
Love as they loved !" said Acon. She
at this

Smiled, for he said not what he meant to
say,
And thought not of its bliss, but of its
end.
He caught the flying smile, and blush'd,
and vow'd
Nor time nor other power, whereto the
might
Of love hath yielded and may yield
again,
Should alter his.

The father of the youth
Wanted not beauty for him, wanted not
Song, that could lift earth's weight
from off his heart,
Discretion, that could guide him thro'
the world,
Innocence, that could clear his way to
heaven ;
Silver and gold and land, not green be-
fore
The ancestral gate, but purple under
skies
Bending far off, he wanted for his heir.
Fathers have given life, but virgin
heart
They never gave ; and dare they then
control
Or check it harshly ? dare they break a
bond
Girt round it by the holiest Power on
high ?

Acon was grieved, he said, grieved
bitterly,
But Acon had complied . . 'twas duti-
ful :
Crush thy own heart, Man ! Man ! but
fear to wound

The gentler, that relies on thee alone,
By thee created, weak or strong by thee ;
Touch it not but for worship ; watch be-
fore
Its sanctuary ; nor leave it till are closed
The temple-doors and the last lamp is
spent.

Rhodopé, in her soul's waste solitude,
Sate mournful by the dull-resounding
sea,

Often not hearing it, and many tears
Had the cold breezes hardened on her
cheek.

Meanwhile he sauntered in the wood of
oaks,
Nor shun'd to look upon the hollow
stone

That held the milk and honey, nor to
lay
His lighted hand where recently 'twas
laid

Opposite hers, when finger playfully
Advanced and pushed back finger, on
each side.

He did not think of this, as she would
do

If she were there alone.

The day was hot;
The moss invited him; it cool'd his
cheek,

It cool'd his hands; he thrust them into
it

And sank to slumber. Never was there
dream

Divine as his. He saw the Hamadryad.
She took him by the arm and led him on
Along a valley, where profusely grew
The smaller lilies with their pendent
bells,

And, hiding under mint, chill drosera,
The violet shy of butting cyclamen,
The feathery fern, and, browser of moist
banks,

Her offspring round her, the soft straw-
berry;

The quivering spray of ruddy tamarisk,
The oleander's light-haired progeny
Breathing bright freshness in each
other's face,

And graceful rose, bending her brow,
with cup

Of fragrance and of beauty, boon for
Gods.

The fragrance fill'd his breast with such
delight

His senses were bewildered, and he
thought

He saw again the face he most had
loved.

He stopped: the Hamadryad at his side
Now stood between: then drew him far-
ther off:

He went, compliant as before: but soon
Verdure had ceased: altho' the ground
was smooth,

Nothing was there delightful. At this
change

He would have spoken, but his guide
repressed

All questioning, and said,
"Weak youth! what brought

Thy footstep to this wood, my native
haunt,

My life-long residence? this bank,
where first

I sate with him . . . the faithful (now I
know,

Too late!) the faithful Rhaicos. Haste
thee home:

Be happy, if thou canst; but come no

Where those whom death alone could
sever, died."

He started up: the moss whereon he
slept

Was dried and withered: deadlier pale-
ness spread

Over his cheek; he sickened: and the
sire

Had land enough; it held his only son.
1847.

MENELAUS AND HELEN AT TROY

*After the fall of Troy, Helen is pursued
by Menelaus up the steps of the pal-
ace; an old attendant deprecates
and intercepts his vengeance.*

Menelaus. Out of my way! Off! or
my sword may smite thee
Heedless of venerable age. And thou
Fugitive! stop. Stand, traitress, on that
stair—

Thou mountest not another, by the
gods!

Now take the death thou meritest, the
death.

Zeus who presides o'er hospitality,
And every other god whom thou hast
left,

And every other who abandons thee
In this accursed city, sends at last.

Turn, vilest of vile slaves! turn, para-
mour

Of what all other women hate, of cow-
ards,

Turn, lest this hand wrench back thy
head, and toss

It and its odors to the dust and flames.

Helen. Welcome, the death thou
promisest! Not fear

But shame, obedience, duty, make me
turn.

Menelaus. Duty! false harlot!
Helen. Name too true! severe

Precursor to the blow that is to fall.
It should alone suffice for killing me.

Menelaus. Ay, weep: be not the only
one in Troy

Who wails not on this day—its last—
the day

Thou and thy crimes darken with dead
on dead.

Helen. Spare! spare! O let the last
that falls be me,

There are but young and old.
Menelaus. There are but guilty

Where thou art, and the sword strikes
none amiss.

Hearst thou not the creeping blood
buzz near

Like flies? or wouldst thou rather hear
it hiss

Louder, against the flaming roofs thrown
down

Wherewith the streets are pathless? Ay,
but vengeance

Springs over all; and Nemesis and Atè
Drove back the flying ashes with both
hands.

I never saw thee weep till now: and
now

There is no pity in thy tears. The tiger
Leaves not her young athirst for the
first milk,

As thou didst. Thine could scarce have
clasped thy knee

If she had felt thee leave her.

Helen. O my child!

My only one! thou livest: 'tis enough;
Hate me, abhor me, curse me—these are
duties—

Call me but Mother in the shades of
death!

She now is twelve years old, when the
bud swells

And the first colors of uncertain life

Begin to tinge it.

Menelaus (aside.) Can she think
of home?

Hers once, mine yet, and sweet Her-
mionè's!

Is there one spark that cheer'd my hearth,
one left,

For thee, my last of love!

Scorn, righteous scorn
Blows it from me—but thou mayst—
never, never—

Thou shalt not see her even there. The
slave

On earth shall scorn thee, and the damn'd
below.

Helen. Delay not either fate. If death
is mercy,

Send me among the captives; so that
Zeus

May see his offspring led in chains away,
And thy hard brother, pointing with his
sword [shore,

At the last wretch that crouches on the
Cry, "She alone shall never sail for
Greece!"

Menelaus. Hast thou more words?

Her voice is musical
As the young maids who sing to Artemis:
How glossy is that yellow braid my grasp
Seiz'd and let loose! Ah! can then years
have past

Since—but the children of the gods, like
them,
Suffer not age.

Helen! speak honestly,
And thus escape my vengeance—was it
force

That bore thee off?

Helen. It was some evil god.

Menelaus. Helping that hated man?

Helen. How justly hated!

Menelaus. By thee too?

Helen. Hath he not made thee un-
happy?

O do not strike.

Menelaus. Wretch!

Helen. Strike, but do not speak.

Menelaus. Lest thou remember me
against thy will.

Helen. Lest I look up and see you
wroth and sad,

Against my will; O! how against my will
They know above, they who perhaps
can pity.

Menelaus. They shall not save thee.

Helen. Then indeed they pity.

Menelaus. Prepare for death.

Helen. Not from that hand: 'twould
pain you.

Menelaus. Touch not my hand.—Easily
dost thou drop it!

Helen. Easy are all things, do but thou
command.

Menelaus. Look up then.

Helen. To the hardest proof of all
I am now bidden; bid me not look up.

Menelaus. She looks as when I led her
on behind

The torch and fife, and when the blush
o'erspread

Her girlish face at tripping in the myrtle
On the first step before the wreath'd
gate.

Approach me. Fall not on thy knees.

Helen. The hand

That is to slay me, best may slay me thus.

I dare no longer see the light of heaven,
Not thine—alas! the light of heaven to
me.

Menelaus. Follow me.

She holds out both arms—and now
Drops them again.—She comes.—Why
stoppest thou?

Helen. O Menelaus! could thy heart
know mine,

As once it did—for then they did con-
verse,

Generous the one, the other not un-
worthy— [than guilt.

Thou wouldst find sorrow deeper even

Menelaus. And I must lead her by the hand again?
 Nought shall persuade me. Never. She draws back—
 The true alone and loving sob like her.
Come Helen! [*He takes her hand.*]
Helen. O let never Greek see this!
 Hide me from Argos, from Amyclai hid me,
 Hide me from all.
Menelaus. Thy anguish is too strong
 For me to strive with.
Helen. Leave it all to me.
Menelaus. Peace! Peace! The wind, I hope, is fair for Sparta. 1847.

ÆSCHYLOS AND SOPHOCLES

Sophocles. Thou goest then, and leavest none behind
 Worthy to rival thee!
Æschylos. Nay, say not so.
 Whose is the hand that now is pressing mine?
 A hand I may not ever press again!
 What glorious forms hath it brought boldly forth
 From Pluto's realm! The blind old *Cædipos*
 Was led on one side by *Antigone*,
Sophocles propped the other.
Sophocles. *Sophocles*
 Sooth'd not *Prometheus* chain'd upon his rock,
 Keeping the vultures and the Gods away;
Sophocles is not greater than the chief
 Who conquered *Ilion*, nor could he revenge
 His murder, or stamp everlasting brand
 Upon the brow of that adulterous wife.
Æschylos. Live, and do more.
 Thine is the *Lemnian* isle,
 And thou has placed the arrows in the hand
 Of *Philoctetes*, hast assuaged his wounds
 And given his aid without which *Greece*
 had fail'd.
Sophocles. I did indeed drive off the
 pest of flies;
 We also have our pest of them which buzz
 About our honey, darken it, and sting;
 We laugh at them, for under hands like ours,
 Without the wing that *Philoctetes* shook,
 One single feather crushes the whole swarm.

I must be grave,
 Hath *Sicily* such charms
 Above our *Athens*? Many charms hath she,
 But she hath kings. Accursed be the race!
Æschylos. But where kings honor
 better men than they
 Let kings be honored too.
 The laurel crown
 Surmounts the golden; wear it; and
 farewell. 1847.

SHAKESPEARE AND MILTON

THE tongue of England, that which
 myriads
 Have spoken and will speak, were paralyzed
 Hereafter, but two mighty men stand forth
 Above the flight of ages, two alone;
 One crying out,
All nations spoke thro' me.
 The other:
True; and thro' this trumpet burst
God's word; the fall of Angels, and the doom
First of immortal, then of mortal, Man.
Glory! be glory! not to me, to God.
 1853.

TO YOUTH

WHERE art thou gone, light-ankled
 Youth?
 With wing at either shoulder,
 And smile that never left thy mouth
 Until the Hours grew colder:
 Then somewhat seem'd to whisper near
 That thou and I must part;
 I doubted it: I felt no fear,
 No weight upon the heart:
 If aught befell it, Love was by
 And roll'd it off again;
 So, if there ever was a sigh,
 'Twas not a sigh of pain.
 I may not call thee back; but thou
 Returnest when the hand
 Of gentle Sleep waves o'er my brow
 His poppy-crested wand;
 Then smiling eyes bend over mine,
 Then lips once pressed invite;
 But sleep hath given a silent sign,
 And both, alas! take flight.

1853.

TO AGE

WELCOME, old friend! These many
years

Have we lived door by door:
The Fates have laid aside their shears
Perhaps for some few more.

I was indocile at an age
When better boys were taught,
But thou at length hast made me sage,
If I am sage in aught.

Little I know from other men,
Too little they from me,
But thou hast pointed well the pen
That writes these lines to thee.

Thanks for expelling Fear and Hope,
One vile, the other vain;
One's scourge, the other's telescope,
I shall not see again:

Rather what lies before my feet
My notice shall engage—
He who hath braved Youth's dizzy heat
Dreads not the frost of Age. 1853.

THE CHRYSOLITES AND RUBIES
BACCHUS BRINGS

THE chrysolites and rubies Bacchus
brings
To crown the feast where swells the
broad-vein'd brow,
Where maidens blush at what the min-
strel sings,
They who have coveted may covet
now.

Bring me, in cool alcove, the grape un-
crushed,
The peach of pulpy cheek and down
mature,
Where every voice (but bird's or child's)
is hushed,
And every thought, like the brook
nigh, runs pure. 1853.

SO THEN, I FEEL NOT DEEPLY!

So then, I feel not deeply! if I did,
I should have seized the pen and pierced
therewith
The passive world!
And thus thou reasonest?
Well hast thou known the lover's, not so
well

The poet's heart: while that heart
bleeds, the hand
Presses it close. Grief must run on and
pass

Into near Memory's more quiet shade
Before it can compose itself in song.
He who is agonized and turns to show
His agony to those who sit around,
Seizes the pen in vain: thought, fancy,
power,

Rush back into his bosom; all the
strength

Of genius can not draw them into light
From under mastering Grief; but
Memory,

The Muse's mother, nurses, rears them
up,
Informs, and keeps them with her all her
days. 1853.

YEARS, MANY PARTI-COLORED
YEARS

YEARS, many parti-colored years,
Some have crept on, and some have
flown
Since first before me fell those tears
I never could see fall alone.
Years, not so many, are to come,
Years not so varied, when from you
One more will fall: when, carried home,
I see it not, nor hear *adieu*. 1853.

I WONDER NOT THAT YOUTH
REMAINS

I wonder not that Youth remains
With you, wherever else she flies:
Where could she find such fair domains,
Where bask beneath such sunny eyes?
1853.

ON MUSIC

MANY love music but for music's sake,
Many because her touches can awake
Thoughts that repose within the breast
half-dead,
And rise to follow where she loves to
lead.
What various feelings come from days
gone by!
What tears from far-off sources dim the
eye!
Few, when light fingers with sweet
voices play
And melodies swell, pause, and melt
away,

Mind how at every touch, at every tone,
A spark of life hath glisten'd and hath
gone. 1853.

ROSE AYLMER'S HAIR, GIVEN BY
HER SISTER

BEAUTIFUL spoils ! borne off from van-
quished death !

Upon my heart's high altar shall ye
lie,

Moved but by only one adorer's breath,
Retaining youth, rewarding constancy.
1853.

DEATH STANDS ABOVE ME

DEATH stands above me, whispering low
I know not what into my ear :
Of his strange language all I know
Is, there is not a word of fear. 1853.

ON HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTH-
DAY

I STROVE with none ; for none was worth
my strife,
Nature I loved, and next to Nature,
Art ;
I warmed both hands before the fire of
life,
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.
1853.

ON THE DEATH OF SOUTHEY

It was a dream (ah ! what is not a
dream ?)
In which I wander'd thro' a boundless
space
Peopled by those that peopled earth ere-
while.
But who conducted me ? That gentle
Power,
Gentle as Death, Death's brother. On
his brow
Some have seen poppies ; and perhaps
among
The many flowers about his wavy curls
Poppies there might be ; roses I am sure
I saw, and dimmer amaranths between.
Lightly I thought I leaped across a
grave
Smelling of cool fresh turf, and sweet it
smelt.
I would, but must not linger ; I must on,
To tell my dream before forgetfulness
Sweeps it away, or breaks or changes it.

I was among the shades (if shades they
were)
And look'd around me for some friendly
hand

To guide me on my way, and tell me all
That compass'd me around. I wish'd to
find

One no less firm or ready than the guide
Of Alighieri, trustier far than he,
Higher in intellect, more conversant
With earth and heaven and whatso lies
between.

He stood before me—Southey.

"Thou art he,"
Said I, "whom I was wishing."

"That I know,"
Replied the genial voice and radiant eye.

"We may be question'd, question we
may not ;

For that might cause to bubble forth
again

Some bitter spring which crossed the
pleasantest

And shadiest of our paths."

"I do not ask,"
Said I, "about your happiness ; I see

The same serenity as when we walked
Along the downs of Clifton. Fifty years
Have roll'd behind us since that summer-
tide,

Nor thirty fewer since along the lake
Of Lario, to Bellaggio villa-crown'd,
Thro' the crisp waves I urged my side-
ling bark,

Amid sweet salutations off the shore
From lordly Milan's proudly courteous
dames."

"Landor ! I well remember it," said he,
"I had just lost my first-born only boy,
And then the heart is tender ; lightest
things

Sink into it, and dwell there evermore."
The words were not yet spoken when
the air

Blew balmier ; and around the parent's
neck

An Angel threw his arms : it was that
son.

"Father ! I felt you wished me," said
the boy,

"Behold me here !"

Gentle the sire's embrace,
Gentle his tone. "See here your father's
friend !"

He gazed into my face, then meekly
said

"He whom my father loves hath his re-
On earth ; a richer one awaits him
here." 1853.

ON SOUTHEY'S DEATH

FRIENDS! hear the words my wander-
ing thoughts would say,
And cast them into shape some other
day.

Southey, my friend of forty years, is
gone,
And, shattered by the fall, I stand alone.
1858.

HEART'S-EASE

THERE is a flower I wish to wear,
But not until first worn by you . .
Heart's-ease . . of all earth's flowers
most rare;
Bring it; and bring enough for two.
1858.

THE THREE ROSES¹

WHEN the buds began to burst,
Long ago, with Rose the First,
I was walking; joyous then
Far above all other men,
Till before us up there stood
Britonferry's oaken wood,
Whispering, "*Happy as thou art,
Happiness and thou must part.*"
Many summers have gone by
Since a Second Rose and I
(Rose from that same stem) have told
This and other tales of old.
She upon her wedding-day
Carried home my tenderest lay;
From her lap I now have heard
Gleeful, chirping, Rose the Third,
Not for *her* this hand of mine
Rhyme with nuptial wreath shall twine;
Cold and torpid it must lie,
Mute the tongue and closed the eye.
1858.

LATELY OUR SONGSTERS LOI-
TERED IN GREEN LANES

LATELY our songsters loiter'd in green
lanes,
Content to catch the ballads of the
plains;
I fancied I had strength enough to
climb
A loftier station at no distant time,
And might securely from intrusion doze
Upon the flowers thro' which Ilissus
flows.

¹ See pages 428 and 441. "Rose the Third" was the daughter of "the Second Rose," and thus the grand-niece of Rose Aylmer.

In those pale olive grounds all voices
cease,
And from afar dust fills the paths of
Greece.
My slumber broken and my doublet
torn,
I find the laurel also bears a thorn.
1863.

THESEUS AND HIPPOLYTA¹

Hippolyta. Eternal hatred I have
sworn against
The persecutor of my sisterhood;
In vain, proud son of Ægeus, hast thou
snapped
Their arrows and derided them; in vain
Leadest thou me a captive; I can die,
And die I will.

Theseus. Nay; many are the years
Of youth and beauty for Hippolyta.

Hippolyta. I scorn my youth, I hate
my beauty. Go!
Monster! of all the monsters in these
wilds
Most frightful and most odious to my
sight.

Theseus. I boast not that I saved thee
from the bow
Of Scythian.

Hippolyta. And for what? To die
disgraced.

Strong as thou art, yet thou art not so
strong
As Death is, when we call him for sup-
port.

Theseus. Him too will I ward off; he
strikes me first,

Hippolyta, long after, when these eyes
Are closed, and when the knee that
supplicates

Can bend no more.

Hippolyta. Is the man mad?

Theseus. He is.

Hippolyta. So, thou canst tell one
truth, however false.

In other things.

Theseus. What other? Thou dost
pause,

And thine eyes wander over the smooth
turf

As if some gem (but gem thou wearest
not)

Had fallen from the remnant of thy
hair.

¹ Written by Landor immediately before its publication, at the age of eighty-eight. Perhaps the only other example in literature of such vigor and creative power, at such an age, is that of Sophocles.

Hippolyta! speak plainly, answer me,
What have I done to raise thy fear or
hate?

Hippolyta. Fear I despise, perfidy I
abhor.

Unworthy man! did Heracles delude
The maids who trusted him?

Theseus. Did ever I?

Whether he did or not, they never told
me:

I would have chided him.

Hippolyta. Thou chide him! thou!
The Spartan mothers well remember
thee.

Theseus. Scorn adds no beauty to the
beautiful.

Heracles was beloved by Omphale,
He never parted from her, but obey'd
Her slightest wish, as Theseus will Hip-
polyta's.

Hippolyta. Then leave me, leave me
instantly; I know

The way to my own country.

Theseus. This command,

And only this, my heart must disobey.
My country shall be thine, and there
thy state

Regal.

Hippolyta. Am I a child? Give me
my own,

And keep for weaker heads thy dia-
dems.

Thermodon I shall never see again,
Brightest of rivers, into whose clear
depth

My mother plunged me from her
warmer breast,

And taught me early to divide the waves
With arms each day more strong, and
soon to chase

And overtake the father swan, nor heed
His hoarser voice or his uplifted wing.

Where are my sisters? are there any left?
Theseus. I hope it.

Hippolyta. And I fear it: theirs may
be

A fate like mine; which, O ye Gods, for-
bid!

Theseus. I pity thee, and would as-
suage thy grief.

Hippolyta. Pity me not; thy anger I
could bear.

Theseus. There is no place for anger
where thou art.

Commiseration even men may feel

For those who want it: even the fiercer
beasts

Lick the sore-wounded of a kindred
race,

Hearing their cry, albeit they may not
help.

Hippolyta. This is no falsehood: and
can he be false

Who speaks it?

I remember not the time

When I have wept, it was so long ago.

Thou forest tears from me, because . .
because . .

I cannot hate thee as I ought to do.

1863.

AN AGED MAN WHO LOVED TO DOZE AWAY

AN aged man who loved to doze away

An hour by daylight, for his eyes were
dim,

And he had seen too many suns go down
And rise again, dreamed that he saw two
forms

Of radiant beauty; he would clasp them
both,

But both flew stealthily away. He cried
In his wild dream,

"I never thought, O youth,
That thou, altho' so cherished, would'st
return,

But I did think that he who came with
thee,

Love, who could swear more sweetly
than birds sing,

Would never leave me comfortless and
lone."

A sigh broke through his slumber, not
the last.

1863.

WELL I REMEMBER HOW YOU SMILED

WELL I remember how you smiled

To see me write your name upon

The soft sea-sand. "O! what a child!

You think you're writing upon stone!"

I have since written what no tide

Shall ever wash away, what men

Unborn shall read o'er ocean wide

And find Ianthé's name again.

1863.

TO MY NINTH DECADE

To my ninth decade I have totter'd on,
And no soft arm bends now my steps
to steady;

She, who once led me where she would,
is gone,

So when he calls me, Death shall find
me ready.

1863.

TENNYSON

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TENNYSON

CLARIBEL

A MELODY

WHERE Claribel low-lieth
The breezes pause and die,
Letting the rose-leaves fall;
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,
With an ancient melody
Of an inward agony,
Where Claribel low-lieth.

At eve the beetle boometh
Athwart the thicket lone;
At noon the wild bee hummeth
About the moss'd headstone;
At midnight the moon cometh,
And looketh down alone.
Her song the lintwhite swelleth,
The clear-voiced mavis dwelleth,
The callow throstle lisbeth,
The slumbrous wave outwelleth,
The babbling rannel crispeth,
The hollow grot replieth
Where Claribel low-lieth. 1830.

THE POET

THE poet in a golden clime was born,
With golden stars above;
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn
of scorn,
The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good
and ill,
He saw thro' his own soul.
The marvel of the everlasting will,
An open scroll,

Before him lay; with echoing feet he
threaded
The secretest walks of fame:
The viewless arrows of his thoughts
were headed
And wing'd with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver
tongue,
And of so fierce a flight,
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,
Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which
bore
Them earthward till they lit;
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field
flower,
The fruitful wit

Cleaving took root, and springing forth
anew
Where'er they fell, behold,
Like to the mother plant in semblance,
grew
A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling
The winged shafts of truth,
To throng with stately blooms the
breathing spring
Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with
beams,
Tho' one did fling the fire;
Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many
dreams
Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the
world
Like one great garden show'd,
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark
upcurl'd,
Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sun-
rise
Her beautiful bold brow,
When rites and forms before his burn-
ing eyes
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes
 Sunn'd by those orient skies ;
 But round about the circles of the globes
 Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in flame
 WISDOM, a name to shake
 All evil dreams of power—a sacred name.
 And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,
 And as the lightning to the thunder
 Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,
 Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No sword
 Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,
 But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his* word
 She shook the world. 1830.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT¹

PART I

On either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky ;
 And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot ;
 And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow
 Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
 Little breezes dusk and shiver
 Thro' the wave that runs for ever
 By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
 Overlook a space of flowers.
 And the silent isle inbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
 Slide the heavy barges trail'd
 By slow horses ; and unhail'd
 The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot ;
 But who hath seen her wave her hand ?

¹ See the *Life of Tennyson*, by his Son, I, 116-117.

Or at the casement seen her stand ?
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early
 In among the bearded barley,
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly
 From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot ;
 And by the moon the reaper weary,
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
 Listening, whispers " 'T is the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."

PART II

There she weaves by night and day
 A magic web with colors gay.
 She has heard a whisper say,
 A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
 She knows not what the curse may be,
 And so she weaveth steadily,
 And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
 That hangs before her all the year,
 Shadows of the world appear.
 There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot ;
 There the river eddy whirls,
 And there the surly village-churls,
 And the red cloaks of market girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
 An abbot on an ambling pad,
 Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
 Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;
 And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
 The knights come riding two and two :
 She hath no loyal knight and true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
 To weave the mirror's magic sights,
 For often thro' the silent nights
 A funeral, with plumes and lights
 And music, went to Camelot ;
 Or when the moon was overhead,
 Came two young lovers lately wed :
 " 'I am half sick of shadows," said
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
 He rode between the barley-sheaves,

The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily

As he rode down to Camelot ;
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armor rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot ;
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;
"The curse is come upon me," cried
The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complain-
ing,
Heavily the low sky raining
Over tower'd Camelot ;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loos'd the chain, and down she lay ;
The broad stream bore her far away,
The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night
She floated down to Camelot ;
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly
And her eyes were darken'd wholly
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this ? and what is here ?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer,
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot :
But Lancelot mused a little space ;
He said, "She has a lovely face ;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott." 1832, 1842.

SONG: THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER

It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That trembles in her ear ;
For mid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white

And I would be the girdle
 About her dainty dainty waist,
 And her heart would beat against me,
 In sorrow and in rest ;
 And I should know if it beat right,
 I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
 And all day long to fall and rise
 Upon her balmy bosom,
 With her laughter or her sighs ;
 And I would lie so light, so light,
 I scarce should be unclasp'd at night.
 1832.

CENONE

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
 Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
 The swimming vapor slopes athwart the
 glen,
 Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine
 to pine,
 And loiters, slowly drawn. On either
 hand
 The lawns and meadow-ledges midway
 down
 Hang rich in flowers, and far below
 them roars
 The long brook falling thro' the cloven
 ravine
 In cataract after cataract to the sea.
 Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
 Stands up and takes the morning; but
 in front
 The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
 Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
 The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon
 Mournful CEnone, wandering forlorn
 Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.
 Her cheek had lost the rose, and round
 her neck
 Floated her hair or seem'd to float in
 rest.
 She, leaning on a fragment twined with
 vine,
 Sang to the stillness till the mountain-
 shade
 Sloped downward to her seat from the
 upper cliff.

"O mother Ida, many fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 For now the noonday quiet holds the
 hill ;
 The grasshopper is silent in the grass ;
 The lizard, with his shadow on the
 stone, [dead,
 Rests like a shadow, and the winds are

The purple flower droops, the golden
 bee
 Is lily-cradled : I alone awake.
 My eyes are full of tears, my heart of
 love,
 My heart is breaking and my eyes are
 dim,
 And I am all aweary of my life.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Hear me, O earth, hear me, O hills, O
 caves
 That house the cold-crown'd snake ! O
 mountain brooks,
 I am the daughter of a River God,
 Hear me, for I will speak, and build up
 all
 My sorrow with my song, as yonder
 walls
 Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,
 A cloud that gather'd shape ; for it
 may be
 That, while I speak of it, a little while
 My heart may wander from its deeper
 woe.

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 I waited underneath the dawning hills ;
 Aloft the mountain-lawn was dewy-
 dark,
 And dewy-dark aloft the mountain-pine.
 Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,
 Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd,
 white-hooved,
 Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Far off the torrent call'd me from the
 cleft ;
 Far up the solitary morning smote
 The streaks of virgin snow. With down-
 dropt eyes
 I sat alone ; white-breasted like a star
 Fronting the dawn he moved ; a leopard
 skin
 Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny
 hair
 Cluster'd about his temples like a God's ;
 And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-
 bow brightens
 When the wind blows the foam, and all
 my heart
 Went forth to embrace him coming ere
 he came.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 He smiled, and opening out his milk-
 white palm

Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,
That smelt ambrosially, and while I
look'd
And listen'd, the full-flowing river of
speech

Came down upon my heart:

'My own Enone,
Beautiful-brow'd Enone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind
ingraven

"For the most fair," would seem to
award it thine,

As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married
brows.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
He pressed the blossom of his lips to
mine,
And added, 'This was cast upon the
board,
When all the full-faced presence of the
Gods

Ranged in the halls of Peleus; where-
upon
Rose feud, with question unto whom
'twere due;

But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,
Delivering, that to me, by common
voice

Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the
cave

Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest
pine,

Mayst well behold them unbeheld, un-
heard

Hear all, and see thy Paris, judge of
Gods."

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
It was the deep midnoon; 'one silvery
cloud

Had lost his way between the piny sides
Of this long glen. Then to the bower
they came,

Naked they came to that smooth-
swarded bower, [fire,

And at their feet the crocus brake like
Violet, amaranthus, and asphodel,
Lotos and lilies; and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and
vine, [toon

This way and that, in many a wild fes-
tan riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower thro'
and thro'.

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and
lean'd

Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant
dew.

Then first I heard the voice of her to
whom

Coming thro' heaven, like a light that
grows

Larger and clearer, with one mind the
Gods

Rise up for reverence. She to Paris
made

Proffer of royal power, ample rule
Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue

Wherewith to embellish state, 'from
many a vale

And river-sunder'd champaign clothed
with corn,

Or labor'd mine undrainable of ore.
Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and
toll,

From many an inland town and haven
large,

Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing
citadel

In glassy bays among her tallest towers.'

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die.
Still she spake on and still she spake of
power,

'Which in all action is the end of all;
Power fitted to the season; wisdom-bred

And throned of wisdom—from all neigh-
bor crowns

Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon
from me,

From me, heaven's queen, Paris, to thee
king-born,

A shepherd all thy life but yet king-
born,

Should come most welcome, seeing men,
in power

Only, are likest Gods, who have attain'd
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats

Above the thunder, with undying bliss
In knowledge of their own supremacy.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
She ceased, and Paris held the costly
fruit

Out at arm's-length, so much the thought
of power

Flatter'd his spirit; but Pallas where
she stood

Somewhat apart, her clear and bared
limbs

O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed
 spear
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,
 The while, above, her full and earnest
 eye
 Over her snow-cold breast and angry
 cheek
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made re-
 ply:
 'Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-
 control,
 These three alone lead life to sovereign
 power.
 Yet not for power (power of herself
 Would come uncall'd for) but to live by
 law,
 Acting the law we live by without fear;
 And, because right is right, to follow
 right
 Were wisdom in the scorn of conse-
 quence.'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Again she said: 'I woo thee not with
 gifts.
 Sequel of gnerdon could not alter me
 To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,
 So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed,
 If gazing on divinity disrobed
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of
 fair,
 Unbias'd by self-profit, O, rest thee sure
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to
 thee,
 So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood,
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a
 God's,
 To push thee forward thro' a life of
 shocks,
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance
 grow
 Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown
 will,
 Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,
 Commensure perfect freedom.'

"Here she ceas'd,
 And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, 'O
 Paris,
 Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me not,
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is
 me!

"O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Italian Aphrodite beautiful,
 Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in
 Paphian wells,
 With rosy slender fingers backward drew

From her warm brows and bosom her
 deep hair
 Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
 And shoulder; from the violets her light
 foot
 Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded
 form
 Between the shadows of the vine-bunches
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she
 moved.

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,
 The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
 Half-whisper'd in his ear, 'I promise
 thee
 The fairest and most loving wife in
 Greece.'
 She spoke and laugh'd; I shut my sight
 for fear;
 But when I look'd, Paris had raised his
 arm,
 And I beheld great Herès angry eyes,
 As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
 And I was left alone within the bower;
 And from that time to this I am alone,
 And I shall be alone until I die.

"Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.
 Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not
 fair?
 My love hath told me so a thousand
 times.
 Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,
 When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,
 Eyed like the evening star, with playful
 tail
 Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most
 loving is she?
 Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my
 arms
 Were wound about thee, and my hot lips
 pressed
 Close, close to thine in that quick-falling
 dew
 Of fruitful kisses, thick as autumn rains
 Flash in the pools of whirling Simois!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 They came, they cut away my tallest
 pines,
 My tall dark pines, that plumed the
 craggy ledge
 High over the blue gorge, and all be-
 tween
 The snowy peak and snow-white cataract
 Foster'd the callow eaglet—from beneath
 Whose thick mysterious boughs in the
 dark morn

The panther's roar came muffled, while
 I sat
 Low in the valley. Never, never more
 Shall lone CEnone see the morning mist
 Sweep thro' them; never see them over-
 laid
 With narrow moonlit slips of silver
 cloud,
 Between the loud stream and the trem-
 bling stars.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd
 folds,
 Among the fragments tumbled from the
 glens,
 Or the dry thickets, I could meet with
 her
 The Abominable, that uninvited came
 Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,
 And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
 And bred this change; that I might
 speak my mind,
 And tell her to her face how much I
 hate
 Her presence, hated both of Gods and
 men.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 Hath he not sworn his love a thousand
 times,
 In this green valley, under this green
 hill,
 Even on this hand, and sitting on this
 stone?
 Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with
 tears?
 O happy tears, and how unlike to these!
 O happy heaven, how canst thou see my
 face?
 O happy earth, how canst thou bear my
 weight? [cloud,
 O death, death, death, thou ever-floating
 There are enough unhappy on this earth,
 Pass by the happy souls, that love to
 live;
 I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
 And shadow all my soul, that I may die.
 Thou weighest heavy on the heart with-
 in,
 Weigh heavy on my eyelids; let me die.

"O mother, hear me yet before I die.
 I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
 Do shape themselves within me, more
 and more,
 Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
 Dead sounds at night come from the
 inmost hills,

Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see
 My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother
 Conjectures of the features of her child
 Ere it is born. Her child!—a shudder
 comes

Across me: never child be born of me,
 Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

"O, mother, hear me yet before I die.
 Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,
 Lest their shrill happy laughter come to
 me

Walking the cold and starless road of
 death

Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love
 With the Greek woman. I will rise and
 go

Down into Troy, and ere the stars come
 forth

Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she
 says

A fire dances before her, and a sound
 Rings ever in her ears of armed men.
 What this may be I know not, but I
 know

That wheresoe'er I am by night and day,
 All earth and air seem only burning fire."
 1832, 1842.

THE SISTERS

WE were two daughters of one race;
 She was the fairest in the face.

The wind is blowing in turret and
 tree.

They were together, and she fell;
 Therefore revenge became me well.

O, the earl was fair to see!

She died; she went to burning flame;
 She mix'd her ancient blood with shame.

The wind is howling in turret and tree.
 Whole weeks and months, and early and
 late,

To win his love I lay in wait!

O, the earl was fair to see!

I made a feast; I bade him come;

I won his love, I brought him home.

The wind is roaring in turret and tree.

And after supper, on a bed,

Upon my lap he laid his head.

O, the earl was fair to see!

I kiss'd his eyelids into rest.

His ruddy cheek upon my breast.

The wind is raging in turret and tree.

I hated him with the hate of hell,

But I loved his beauty passing well.

O, the earl was fair to see!

I rose up in the silent night;
 I made my dagger sharp and bright.
 The wind is raving in turret and tree.
 As half-asleep his breath he drew,
 Three times I stabb'd him thro' and thro'.
 O, the earl was fair to see!

I curl'd and comb'd his comely head,
 He look'd so grand when he was dead.
 The wind is blowing in turret and tree.
 I wrapped his body in the sheet,
 And laid him at his mother's feet.
 O, the earl was fair to see! 1832.

W THE PALACE OF ART ¹

I BUILT my soul a lordly pleasure-house,
 Wherein at ease for aye to dwell.
 I said, "O Soul, make merry and ca-
 rouse,
 Dear soul, for all is well."

A huge crag-platform, smooth as burn-
 ish'd brass,
 I chose. The ranged ramparts bright
 From level meadow-bases of deep grass
 Suddenly scaled the light.

Thereon I built it firm. Of ledge or shelf
 The rock rose clear, or winding stair.
 My soul would live alone unto herself
 In her high palace there.

And "while the world runs round and
 round," I said,
 "Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
 Still as, while Saturn whirls, his stead-
 fast shade
 Sleeps on his luminous ring."

To which my soul made answer readily:
 "Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
 In this great mansion, that is built for
 me.
 So royal-rich and wide."

Four courts I made, East, West and South
 and North,
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted
 forth
 A flood of fountain-foam.

And round the cool green courts there
 ran a row
 Of cloisters, branch'd like mighty
 woods,

¹ See the Life of Tennyson, I, 118-121.

Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
 Of spouted fountain-floods:

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
 That lent broad verge to distant lands,
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where
 the sky
 Dipped down to sea and sands.

From those four jets four currents in one
 swell
 Across the mountain stream'd below
 In misty folds, that floating as they fell
 Lit up a torrent-bow.

And high on every peak a statue seem'd
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
 A cloud of incense of all odor steam'd
 From out a golden cup.

So that she thought, "And who shall gaze
 upon
 My palace with unblinded eyes,
 While this great bow will waver in the
 sun,
 And that sweet incense rise?"

For that sweet incense rose and never
 fail'd,
 And, while day sank or mounted
 higher,
 The light aerial gallery, golden-rail'd,
 Burnt like a fringe of fire.

Likewise the deep-set windows, stain'd
 and traced,
 Would seem slow-flaming crimson fires
 From shadow'd grots of arches inter-
 laced,
 And tipped with frost-like spires.

Full of long-sounding corridors it was,
 That over-vaulted grateful gloom,
 Thro' which the livelong day my soul did
 pass,
 Well-pleased, from room to room.

Full of great rooms and small the palace
 stood,
 All various, each a perfect whole
 From living Nature, fit for every mood
 And change of my still soul.

For some were hung with arras green
 and blue,
 Showing a gaudy summer-morn,
 Where with puff'd cheek the belted
 hunter blew
 His wreathed bugle-horn.

One seem'd all dark and red—a tract of
sand,
And some one pacing there alone,
Who paced for ever in a glimmering
land,
Lit with a low large moon.

One show'd an iron coast and angry
waves,
You seem'd to hear them climb and
fall
And roar rock-thwarted under bellowing
caves,
Beneath the windy wall.

And one, a full-fed river winding slow
By herds upon an endless plain,
The ragged rims of thunder brooding
low,
With shadow-streaks of rain.

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil:
In front they bound the sheaves. Be-
hind
Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,
And hoary to the wind.

And one a foreground black with stones
and slags;
Beyond, a line of heights; and higher
All barr'd with long white cloud the
scornful crags;
And highest, snow and fire.

And one, an English home—gray twi-
light pour'd
On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order
stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace.

Nor these alone, but every landscape
fair,
As fit for every mood of mind,
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was
there
Not less than truth design'd.

.
Or the maid-mother by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny-warm,
Beneath branch-work of costlly sardonyx
Sat smiling, babe in arm.

Or in a clear-wall'd city on the sea,
Near gilded organ-pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept Saint
Cecily;
An angel look'd at her

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise
A group of Houris bow'd to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and
eyes
That said, We wait for thee.

Or mythic Uther's deeply-wounded son
In some fair space of sloping greens
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watch'd by weeping queens.

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot-fall, ere he saw
The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian
king to hear
Of wisdom and of law.

Or over hills with peaky tops engrail'd,
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama slowly sail'd
A summer fann'd with spice.

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew un-
clasp'd,
From off her shoulder backward borne;
From one hand droop'd a crocus; one
hand grasp'd
The mild bull's golden horn.

Or else flush'd Ganymede, his rosy thigh
Half-buried in the eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot thro' the sky
Above the pillar'd town.

Nor these alone; but every legend fair
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
Not less than life, design'd.

.
Then in the towers I placed great bells
that swung,
Moved of themselves, with silver
sounds;
And with choice paintings of wise men
I hung
The royal dais round.

For there was Milton like a seraph
strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and
mild;
And there the world-worn Dante grasp'd
his song,
And somewhat grimly smiled.

And there the Ionian father of the rest;
A million wrinkles carved his skin;
A hundred winters snow'd upon his
breast,
From cheek and throat and chin.

Above, the fair hall-ceiling stately-set
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift.

Below was all mosaic choicely plann'd
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every
land
So wrought they will not fail.

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toil'd onward, prick'd with goads and
stings;
Here play'd, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings;

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or
bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man
declined,
And trusted any cure.

But over these she trod; and those great
bells
Began to chime. She took her throne;
She sat betwixt the shining oriels,
To sing her songs alone.

And thro' the topmost oriels' colored
flame
Two godlike faces gazed below;
Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Ver-
ulam,
The first of those who know.

And all those names that in their motion
were
Full-welling fountain-heads of change,
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazon'd
fair
In diverse raiment strange;

Thro' which the lights, rose, amber, em-
erald, blue,
Flush'd in her temples and her eyes,
And from her lips, as morn from Mem-
non, drew
Rivers of melodies.

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echo'd
song
Throb thro' the ribbed stone;

Singing and murmuring in her feastful
mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,

Lord over Nature, lord of the visible
earth,
Lord of the senses five;

Communing with herself: "All these are
mine,
And let the world have peace or wars,
'Tis one to me." She—when young
night divine
Crown'd dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils—
Lit light in wreaths and anadems,
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollow'd moons of gems,

To mimic heaven; and clapped her hands
and cried,
"I marvel if my still delight
In this great house so royal-rich and wide
Be flatter'd to the height.

"O all things fair to sate my various
eyes!
O shapes and hues that please me well!
O silent faces of the Great and Wise,
My Gods, with whom I dwell!

"O Godlike isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves
of swine
That range on yonder plain.

"In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient
skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and
sleep;
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep."

Then of the moral instinct would she
prate
And of the rising from the dead,
As hers by right of full-accomplish'd
Fate;
And at the last she said:

"I take possession of man's mind and
deed.
I care not what the sects may brawl.
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all."

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flash'd thro' her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn
mirth,
And intellectual throne.

And so she throve and prosper'd ; so three
years

She prosper'd ; on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his
ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal deeps of personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

When she would think, where'er she
turn'd her sight
The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote, " Mene, mene," and divided quite
The kingdom of her thought.

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
Fell on her, from which mood was
born
Scorn of herself ; again, from out that
mood
Laughter at her self-scorn.

" What ! is not this my place of
strength," she said,
" My spacious mansion built for me,
Whereof the strong foundation-stones
were laid
Since my first memory ? "

But in dark corners of her palace stood
Uncertain shapes ; and unawares
On white-eyed phantasms weeping tears
of blood,
And horrible nightmares,

And hollow shades enclosing hearts of
flame,
And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
On corpses three-months-old at noon she
came,
That stood against the wall.

A spot of dull stagnation, without light
Or power of movement, seem'd my
soul,
Mid onward-sloping motions infinite
Making for one sure goal ;

A still salt pool, lock'd in with bars of
sand,
Left on the shore, that hears all night
The plunging seas draw backward from
the land
Their moon led waters white ;

A star that with the choral starry dance
Join'd not, but stood, and standing

89 W

The hollow orb of moving Circumstance
Roll'd round by one fix'd law.

Back on herself her serpent pride had
curl'd.

" No voice," she shriek'd in that lone
hall,

" No voice breaks thro' the stillness of
this world ;
One deep, deep silence all ! "

She, mouldering with the dull earth's
mouldering sod,
Inwraught tenfold in slothful shame,
Lay there exiled from eternal God,
Lost to her place and name ;

And death and life she hated equally,
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere ;

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
And ever worse with growing time,
And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
And all alone in crime.

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt
round
With blackness as a solid wall,
Far off she seem'd to hear the dully
sound
Of human footsteps fall ;

As in strange lands a traveller walking
slow,
In doubt and great perplexity,
A little before moonrise hears the low
Moan of an unknown sea ;

And knows not if it be thunder, or a
sound
Of rocks thrown down, or one deep
cry
Of great wild beasts ; then thinketh, " I
have found
A new land, but I die. "

She howl'd aloud, " I am on fire within.
There comes no murmur of reply.
What is it that will take away my sin,
And save me lest I die ? "

So when four years where wholly
finished,
She threw her royal robes away.
" Make me a cottage in the vale," she
said,
" Where I may mourn and pray.

"Yet pull not down my palace towers,
that are
So lightly, beautifully built;
Perchance I may return with others
there
When I have purged my guilt."
1832.

THE LOTOS-EATERS

"COURAGE!" he said, and pointed to-
ward the land,

"This mounting wave will roll us shore-
ward soon."

In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did
swoon,

Breathing like one that hath a weary
dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the
moon;

And, like a downward smoke, the slender
stream

Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall
did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a down-
ward smoke,

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn,
did go;

And some thro' wavering lights and
shadows broke,

Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward
flow

From the inner land; far off, three
mountain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flush'd; and, dew'd with
showery drops,

Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the
woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
In the red West; thro' mountain clefts
the dale

Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Border'd with palm, and many a winding
vale

And meadow, set with slender galin-
gale;

A land where all things always seem'd
the same!

And round about the keel with faces
pale,

Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters
came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted
stem,

Laden with flower and fruit, whereof
they gave

To each, but whoso did receive of them
And taste, to him the gushing of the
wave

Far far away did seem to mourn and
rave

On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the
grave;

And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart
did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow
sand,

Between the sun and moon upon the
shore;

And sweet it was to dream of Father-
land,

Of child, and wife and slave; but ever-
more

Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the
oar,

Weary the wandering fields of barren
foam.

Then some one said, "We will return no
more;"

And all at once they sang, "Our island
home

Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer
roam."

CHORIC SONG

I

THERE is sweet music here that softer
falls

Than petals from blown roses on the
grass,

Or night-dews on still waters between
walls

Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,

Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from
the blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,

And in the stream the long-leaved
flowers weep,

And from the craggy ledge the poppy
hangs in sleep.

II

Why are we weigh'd upon with heavi-
ness,

And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?

All things have rest: why should we toil alone,

We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown;
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;

Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!"—
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

III

Lo! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud

With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,

Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.

Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,

Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,

Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labor be?

Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,

And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?

All things are taken from us, and become

Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.

Let us alone. What pleasure can we have

To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?

All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave

In silence—ripen, fall, and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death,
or dreamful ease.

V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,

With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,

Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;

To hear each other's whisper'd speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,

And tender curving lines of creamy spray;

To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;

To muse and brood and live again in memory.

With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!

VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears; but all hath suffer'd change;

For surely now our household hearths are cold,

Our sons inherit us, our looks are strange,

And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.

Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings

Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,

And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.

Is there confusion in the little isle?
Let what is broken so remain.

The Gods are hard to reconcile;
'T is hard to settle order once again.

There is confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,

Long labor unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars

And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

VII

But, propped on beds of amaranth and
moly,
How sweet—while warm airs lull us,
blowing lowly—
With half-dropped eyelid still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing
slowly
His waters from the purple hill—
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined
vine—
To watch the emerald-color'd water fall-
ing
Thro' many a woven acanthus-wreath
divine !
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling
brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out
beneath the pine.

VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak,
The Lotos blows by every winding
creek ;
All day the wind breathes low with mel-
lower tone ;
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the
yellow Lotos-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of
motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard,
when the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted
his foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with
an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie
reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless
of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the
bolts are hurl'd
Far below them in the valleys, and the
clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled with
the gleaming world ;
Where they smile in secret, looking over
wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earth-
quake, roaring deeps and fiery
sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and
sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music cen-
tered in a doleful song

Steaming up, a lamentation and an an-
cient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the
words are strong ;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men
that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with
enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and
wine and oil ;
Till they perish and they suffer—some,
't is whisper'd—down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian
valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of
asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet
than toil, the shore
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind
and wave and oar ;
O, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not
wander more. 1832, 1842.

A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN

I READ, before my eyelids dropped their
shade,
“ *The Legend of Good Women*,” long
ago
Sung by the morning star of song, who
made
His music heard below ;

Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose
sweet breath
Preluded those melodious bursts that
fill
The spacious times of great Elizabeth
With sounds that echo still.

And, for a while, the knowledge of his
art
Held me above the subject, as strong
gales
Hold swollen clouds from raining, tho'
my heart,
Brimful of those wild tales,

Charged both mine eyes with tears. In
every land
I saw, wherever light illumineth,
Beauty and anguish walking hand in
hand
The downward slope to death.

Those far-renowned brides of ancient
song
Peopled the hollow dark, like burning
stars,

And I heard sounds of insult, shame,
and wrong,
And trumpets blown for wars ;

And clattering flints batter'd with clang-
ing hoofs ;

And I saw crowds in column'd sanctu-
aries,

And forms that pass'd at windows and
on roofs
Of marble palaces ;

Corpses across the threshold, heroes tall
Dislodging pinnacle and parapet

Upon the tortoise creeping to the wall,
Lances in ambush set ;

And high shrine-doors burst thro' with
heated blasts

That run before the fluttering tongues
of fire ;

White surf wind-scatter'd over sails and
masts,
And ever climbing higher ;

Squadrons and squares of men in brazen
plates,

Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers
woes,

Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron
grates,
And hush'd seraglios.

So shape chased shape as swift as, when
to land

Bluster the winds and tides the self-
same way,

Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level
sand,
Torn from the fringe of spray.

I started once, or seem'd to start in pain,
Resolved on noble things, and strove
to speak,

As when a great thought strikes along
the brain
And flushes all the cheek.

And once my arm was lifted to hew down
A cavalier from off his saddle-bow,

That bore a lady from a leaguer'd town ;
And then, I know not how,

All those sharp fancies, by down-lapsing
thought

Stream'd onward, lost their edges, and
did creep

Roll'd on each other, rounded, smooth'd,
and brought
Into the gulfs of sleep.

At last methought that I had wander'd
far

In an old wood ; fresh-wash'd in coolest
dew

The maiden splendors of the morning
star

Shook in the steadfast blue.

Enormous elm-tree boles did stoop and
lean

Upon the dusky brushwood under-
neath

Their broad curved branches, fledged
with clearest green,

New from its silken sheath.

The dim red Morn had died, her journey
done,

And with dead lips smiled at the
twilight plain,

Half-fallen across the threshold of the
sun,

Never to rise again.

There was no motion in the dumb dead
air,

Not any song of bird or sound of rill ;
Gross darkness of the inner sepulchre

Is not so deadly still

As that wide forest. Growths of jas-
mine turn'd

Their humid arms festooning tree to
tree,

And at the root thro' lush green grasses
burn'd

The red anemone.

I knew the flowers, I knew the leaves, I
knew

The tearful glimmer of the languid
dawn

On those long, rank, dark wood-walks
drench'd in dew,

Leading from lawn to lawn.

The smell of violets, hidden in the green,
Pour'd back into my empty soul and
frame

The times when I remember to have been
Joyful and free from blame.

And from within me a clear undertone
Thrill'd thro' mine ears in that unbliss-
ful clime,

“ Pass freely thro' ; the wood is all thine
Until the end of time.”

At length I saw a lady within call,
Stillter than chisell'd marble, standing
there :

A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair.

Her loveliness with shame and with
surprise

Froze my swift speech; she turning
on my face

The star-like sorrows of immortal eyes,
Spoke slowly in her place:

"I had great beauty; ask thou not my
name: [tiny.

No one can be more wise than des-
Many drew swords and died. Where'er

I came

I brought calamity."

"No marvel, sovereign lady: in fair
field

Myself for such a face had boldly
died."

I answer'd free; and turning I appeal'd
To one that stood beside.

But she, with sick and scornful looks
averse,

To her full height her stately stature
draws;

"My youth," she said, "was blasted
with a curse:

This woman was the cause.

"I was cut off from hope in that sad
place

Which men call'd Aulis in those iron
years:

My father held his hand upon his face;
I, blinded with my tears,

"Still strove to speak: my voice was
thick with sighs

As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
The stern black-bearded kings with

wolfish eyes,

Waiting to see me die.

"The high masts flicker'd as they lay
afloat;

The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and
the shore;

The bright death quiver'd at the victim's
throat—

Touch'd—and I knew no more."

Whereto the other with a downward
brow:

"I would the white cold heavy-
plunging foam,

Whirled by the wind, had roll'd me
deep below,

Then when I left my home."

Her slow full words sank thro' the si-
lence drear,

As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping
sea:

Sudden I heard a voice that cried
"Come here,

That I may look on thee."

I turning saw, throned on a flowery rise,
One sitting on a crimson scarf un-
roll'd;

A queen, with swarthy cheeks and bold
black eyes,

Brow-bound with burning gold.

She, flashing forth a haughty smile, be-
gan:

"I govern'd men by change, and so I
sway'd

All moods. 'Tis long since I have seen
a man.

Once, like the moon, I made

"The ever-shifting currents of the blood
According to my humor ebb and flow.

I have no men to govern in this wood:
That makes my only woe.

"Nay—yet it chafes me that I could
not bend

One will; nor tame and tutor with
mine eye

That dull cold-blooded Cæsar. Prythee,
friend,

Where is Mark Antony?

"The man, my lover, with whom I rode
sublime

On Fortune's neck; we sat as God by
God:

The Nilus would have risen before his
time

And flooded at our nod.

"We drank the Libyan Sun to sleep, and
lit

Lamps which out-burn'd Canopus. O,
my life

In Egypt! O, the dalliance and the wit,
The flattery and the strife,

"And the wild kiss, when fresh from
war's alarms,

My Hercules, my Roman Antony,
My mailed Bacchus leaped into my arms,

Contented there to die!

"And there he died: and when I heard
my name

Sigh'd forth with life, I would not
brook my fear

Of the other; with a worm I balk'd his
fame.

What else was left? look here!—"—

With that she tore her robe apart, and
half

The polish'd argent of her breast to
sight

Laid bare. Thereto she pointed with a
laugh,

Showing the aspic's bite.—

"I died a Queen. The Roman soldier
found

Me lying dead, my crown about my
brows,

A name for ever!—lying robed and
crown'd

Worthy a Roman spouse."

Her warbling voice, a lyre of widest
range

Struck by all passion, did fall down
and glance

From tone to tone, and glided thro' all
change

Of liveliest utterance.

When she made pause I knew not for
delight;

Because with sudden motion from the
ground

She raised her piercing orbs, and fill'd
with light

The interval of sound.

Still with their fires Love tipt his keenest
darts;

As once they drew into two burning
rings

All beams of Love, melting the mighty
hearts

Of captains and of kings.

Slowly my sense undazzled. Then I heard
A noise of some one coming thro' the

lawn,

And singing clearer than the crested bird
That claps his wings at dawn:

"The torrent brooks of hallow'd Israel
From craggy hollows pouring, late and

soon,

Sound all night long, in falling thro' the
dell,

Far-heard beneath the moon.

"The balmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with

beams divine;

All night the splinter'd crags that wall
the dell

With spires of silver shine."

As one that museth where broad sun-
shine laves

The lawn by some cathedral, thro' the
door

Hearing the holy organ rolling waves
Of sound on roof and floor

Within, and anthem sung, is charm'd
and tied

To where he stands;—so stood I, when
that flow

Of music left the lips of her that died
To save her father's vow;

The daughter of the warrior Gileadite,
A maiden pure; as when she went along
From Mizpah's tower'd gate with wel-
come light.

With timbrel and with song.

My words leaped forth: "Heaven heads
the count of crimes

With that wild oath." She render'd
answer high:

"Not so, nor once alone; a thousand
times

I would be born and die.

"Single I grew, like some green plant,
whose root

Creeps to the garden water-pipes be-
neath,

Feeding the flower; but ere my flower to
fruit

Changed, I was ripe for death.

"My God, my land, my father—these
did move

Me from my bliss of life that Nature
gave,

Lower'd softly with a threefold cord of
love

Down to a silent grave.

"And I went mourning, 'No fair
Hebrew boy

Shall smile away my maiden blame
among

The Hebrew mothers'—emptied of all
joy,

Leaving the dance and song,

"Leaving the olive-gardens far below,
Leaving the promise of my bridal

bower, [glow
The valleys of grape-loaded vines that

Beneath the battled tower.

"The light white cloud swam over us.
Anon

We heard the lion roaring from his
den;
We saw the large white stars rise one
by one,
Or, from the darken'd glen,

Saw God divide the night with flying
flame,
And thunder on the everlasting hills.
heard Him, for He spake, and grief be-
came
A solemn scorn of ills.

When the next moon was roll'd into
the sky,
Strength came to me that equall'd my
desire.
How beautiful a thing it was to die
For God and for my sire!

"It comforts me in this one thought to
dwell,
That I subdued me to my father's will;
Because the kiss he gave me, ere I fell,
Sweetens the spirit still.

"Moreover it is written that my race
Hew'd Ammon, hip and thigh, from
Aroer
On Arnon unto Minneth." Here her face
Glow'd, as I look'd at her.

She lock'd her lips; she left me where
I stood:
"Glory to God," she sang, and past
afar,
Thridding the sombre boskage of the
wood,
Toward the morning-star.

Losing her carol I stood pensively,
As one that from a casement leans his
head,
When midnight bells cease ringing sud-
denly,
And the old year is dead.

"Alas! alas!" a low voice, full of care,
Murmur'd beside me: "Turn and look
on me;
I am that Rosamond, whom men call
fair,
If what I was I be.

"Would I had been some maiden coarse
and poor!
O me, that I should ever see the light!
Those dragon eyes of anger'd Eleanor
Do hunt me, day and night."

She ceased in tears, fallen from hope and
trust;

To whom the Egyptian: "O, you
tamely died!
You should have clung to Fulvia's waist,
and thrust
The dagger thro' her side."

With that sharp sound the white dawn's
creeping beams,
Stolen to my brain, dissolved the mys-
tery
Of folded sleep. The captain of my
dreams
Ruled in the eastern sky.

Morn broaden'd on the borders of the
dark
Ere I saw her who clasp'd in her last
trance
Her murder'd father's head, or Joan of
Arc,
A light of ancient France;

Or her who knew that Love can vanquish
Death,
Who kneeling, with one arm about her
king,
Drew forth the poison with her balmy
breath,
Sweet as new buds in spring.

No memory labors longer from the deep
Gold-mines of thought to lift the
hidden ore
That glimpses, moving up, than I from
sleep
To gather and tell o'er

Each little sound and sight. With what
dull pain
Compass'd, how eagerly I sought to
strike
Into that wondrous track of dreams
again!
But no two dreams are like.

As when a soul laments, which hath
been blest,
Desiring what is mingled with past
years,
In yearnings that can never be expressed
By sighs or groans or tears;

Because all words, tho' cull'd with
choicest art,
Failing to give the bitter of the sweet,
Wither beneath the palate, and the heart
Faints, faded by its heat. 1832.

W SAINT AGNES' EVE

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon;
My breath to heaven like vapor goes;
May my soul follow soon!
The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord.
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
To yonder shining ground;
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
To yonder argent round;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
My spirit before Thee;
So in mine earthly house I am,
To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord! and far,
Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors;
The flashes come and go;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
And strows her lights below,
And deepens on and up! the gates
Roll back, and far within
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
To make me pure of sin.
The Sabbaths of Eternity,
One Sabbath deep and wide—
A light upon the shining sea—
The Bridegroom with his bride!

1837.

W YOU ASK ME, WHY, THO' ILL AT
EASE

YOU ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,
Within this region I subsist,
Whose spirits falter in the mist,
And languish for the purple seas.

It is the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited Freedom chose,
The land, where girt with friends or
foes

A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom slowly broadens down
From precedent to precedent:

Where faction seldom gathers head,
But, by degrees, to fullness wrought,
The strength of some diffusive thought
Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute
Opinions, and induce a time
When single thought is civil crime,
And individual freedom mute,

Tho' power should make from land to
land

The name of Britain trebly great—
Tho' every channel of the State
Should fill and choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbor-mouth,
Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,
And I will see before I die
The palms and temples of the South.

1833. 1842.

OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE
HEIGHTS

OF old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet;
Above her shook the starry lights;
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,
But fragments of her mighty voice
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stepped she down thro' town and
field

To mingle with the human race,
And part by part to men reveal'd
The fulness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,
From her isle-altar gazing down,
Who, Godlike, grasps the triple forks
And, king-like, wears the crown.

Her open eyes desire the truth.
The wisdom of a thousand years
Is in them. May perpetual youth
Keep dry their light from tears;

That her fair form may stand and
shine,

Make bright our days and light our
dreams,

Turning to scorn with lips divine
The falsehood of extremes!

1833. 1842.

W LOVE THOU THY LAND

LOVE thou thy land, with love far-
brought

From out the storied past, and used
Within the present, but transfused
Thro' future time by power of thought ;

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,
Love, that endures not sordid ends,
For English natures, freemen, friends,
Thy brothers, and immortal souls.

But pamper not a hasty time,
Nor feed with crude imaginings
The herd, wild hearts and feeble
wings
That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might
To weakness, neither hide the ray
From those, not blind, who wait for
day,
Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds ;
But let her herald, Reverence, fly
Before her to whatever sky
Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the
years :
Cut Prejudice against the grain.
But gentle words are always gain ;
Regard the weakness of thy peers.

Nor toil for title, place, or touch
Of pension, neither count on praise—
It grows to guerdon after-days.
Nor deal in watch-words overmuch ;

Not clinging to some ancient saw,
Not master'd by some modern term,
Not swift nor slow to change, but
firm ;

And in its season bring the law,

That from Discussion's lip may fall
With Life that, working strongly,
binds—

Set in all lights by many minds,
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,
And moist and dry, devising long,
Thro' many agents making strong,
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control
Our being, lest we rust in ease.

We all are changed by still degrees,
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free
To ingroove itself with that which
flies,

And work, a joint of state, that plies
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying hard to shape in act ;
For all the past of Time reveals
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Even now we hear with inward strife
A motion toiling in the gloom—
The Spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits
Completion in a painful school ;
Phantoms of other forms of rule,
New Majesties of mighty States—

The warders of the growing hour,
But vague in vapor, hard to mark ;
And round them sea and air are dark
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,
Is bodied forth the second whole.
Regard gradation, lest the soul
Of Discord race the rising wind ;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,
And heap their ashes on the head ;
To shame the boast so often made,
That we are wiser than our sires.

O, yet, if Nature's evil star
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,
To follow flying steps of Truth
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud,
Must ever shock, like armed foes,
And this be true, till Time shall close,
That Principles are rain'd in blood ;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,
But with his hand against the hilt,
Would pace the troubled land, like
Peace ;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,
Would serve his kind in deed and
word,
Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,
That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that
broke

From either side, nor veil his eyes ;
And if some dreadful need should rise
Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke.

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,
As we bear blossom of the dead :
Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

1833. 1842.

MORTE D'ARTHUR

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea,
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonesse about their lord,
King Arthur ; then, because his wound
was deep,

The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
On one side lay the ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was
full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-
vere :

" The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous
knights

Whereof this world holds record. Such
a sleep

They sleep—the men I loved. I think
that we

Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly
deeds,

Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.

I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come
again

To rule once more—but let what will be
be,

I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till
morn.

Thou therefore take my brand Excali-
bur,

Which was my pride ; for thou remem-
berest how

In those old days, one summer noon, an
arm

Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, won-
derful,

Holding the sword—and how I row'd
across

And took it, and have worn it, like a
king ;

And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known.

But now delay not ; take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere ;
Watch what thou seest, and lightly
bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :
" It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee
thus,

Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the
helm.

A little thing may harm a wounded
man.

Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee
word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he
stept

And in the moon athwart the place of
tombs,

Where lay the mighty bones of ancient
men,

Old knights, and over them the sea-wind
sang

Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He,
stepping down

By zigzag paths and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Exca-
libur,

And o'er him, drawing it, the winter
moon,

Brightening the skirts of a long cloud,
ran forth

And sparkled keen with frost against
the hilt ;

For all the haft twinkled with diamond
sparks,

Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth
work

Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he
stood,

This way and that dividing the swift
mind,

In act to throw ; but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd

There in the many-knotted water-flags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the
marge.

So strode he back slow to the wounded
king.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedi-
vere :

" Hast thou perform'd my mission which
[I gave ?

What is it thou hast seen, or what hast heard?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale :

"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,

Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight ;
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again

As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing

I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time

Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought ;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud :

"And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost forever from the earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.

What good should follow this, if this were done ?

What harm, undone ? deep harm to disobey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand

An act unprofitable, against himself ?
The king is sick, and knows not what he does.

What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath

And rumors of a doubt ? but were this kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,

Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,

Wrought by the lonely maiden of the

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills.'

So might some old man speak in the aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence ;
But now much honor and much fame were lost."

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,

And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded king.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :

"What is it thou hast seen, or what hast heard ?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

"I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath :

"Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me !

Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye

That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,

For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,

In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;

Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.

Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence ;

But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,

And, leaping down the ridges lightly,
plunged

Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,

And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand

Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,

And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,

Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,

Seen where the moving isles of winter shock

By night, with noises of the northern sea.

So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur ;
But ere he dipped the surface, rose an arm
Cloth'd in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

And caught him by the hilt, and brand-
ish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere.

And lightly went the other to the king.
Then spoke King Arthur, drawing
thicker breath :

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is
done.

Speak out ; what is it thou hast heard,
or seen ?"

And answer made the bold Sir Bedi-
vere :

'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest
the gems

Should blind my purpose, for I never
saw,

Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I
die,

Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him,
wheeling him ;

But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonder-
ful,

That caught him by the hilt, and brand-
ish'd him

Three times, and drew him under in the
mere."

And answer made King Arthur,
breathing hard :

"My end draws nigh ; 't is time that I
were gone.

Make broad thy shoulders to receive my
weight,

And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall
die."

So saying, from the pavement he half
rose,

Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue
eyes

As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,

And would have spoken, but he found
not words,

Then took with care, and kneeling on
one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid
hands,

And rising bore him thro' the place of
tombs. [hard,

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted

Like one that feels a nightmare on his
bed

When all the house is mute. So sigh'd
the king,

Muttering and murmuring at his ear,
"Quick, quick !

I fear it is too late, and I shall die."

But the other swiftly strode from ridge
to ridge,

Clothed with his breath, and looking, as
he walk'd,

Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a
cry

Before. His own thought drove him
like a goad.

Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and
right

The bare black cliff clang'd round him,
as he based

His feet on juts of slippery crag that
rang

Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed
heels—

And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky
barge,

Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to
stern,

Beneath them ; and descending they
were ware

That all the decks were dense with stately
forms

Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream
—by these

Three queens with crowns of gold—and
from them rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony

Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one
comes,

Or hath come, since the making of the
world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me
in the barge,"

And to the barge they came. There
those three queens

Put forth their hands, and took the king,
and wept.

But she that rose the tallest of them
all

And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and
chafed his hands,

And call'd him by his name, complaining
loud,

And dropping bitter tears against his
brow
Striped with dark blood; for all his face
was white
And colorless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing
east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd
with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous
curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd
with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that
fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the king;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in
rest.
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and
charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.
Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I
go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my
eyes?
For now I see the true old times are
dead,
When every morning brought a noble
chance,
And every chance brought out a noble
knight.
Such times have been not since the light
that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dis-
solved
Which was an image of the mighty
world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the
years,
Among new men, strange faces, other
minds."
And slowly answer'd Arthur from the
barge:
"The old order changeth, yielding place
to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the
world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in
me?
I have lived my life, and that which I
have done [thou,
May He within himself make pure! but

If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are
wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore,
let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and
day.
For what are men better than sheep or
goats
That nourish a blind life within the
brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of
prayer
Both for themselves and those who call
them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every
way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of
God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
For all my mind is clouded with a
doubt—
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly, but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with
orchard lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with
summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous
wound."
So said he, and the barge with oar and
sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-
breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes
the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir
Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge
of dawn.
And on the mere the wailing died away.
1834. 1842. 1869.¹

DORA ²

WITH farmer Allan at the farm abode
William and Dora. William was his son,
And she his niece. He often look'd at
them
And often thought, "I'll make them
man and wife."

¹ In 1869 the *Morte d'Arthur* was incorporated in the *Passing of Arthur*, the last of the *Idylls of the King*.

² See the *Life of Tennyson*, I, 195-6, and 265.

Now Dora felt her uncle's will in all,
And yearn'd toward William; but the
youth, because
He had always been with her in the
house,

Thought not of Dora.

Then there came a day
When Allan call'd his son, and said:

"My son,
I married late, but I would wish to see
My grandchild on my knees before I die;
And I have set my heart upon a match.
Now therefore look to Dora; she is well
To look to; thrifty too beyond her age.
She is my brother's daughter; he and I
Had once hard words, and parted, and
he died

In foreign lands; but for his sake I bred
His daughter Dora. Take her for your
wife;

For I have wish'd this marriage night
and day,

For many years." But William answered short:

"I cannot marry Dora; by my life,
I will not marry Dora!" Then the old
man

Was wroth, and doubled up his hands,
and said:

"You will not, boy! you dare to answer
thus!

But in my time a father's word was law,
And so it shall be now for me. Look to
it;

Consider, William, take a month to
think,

And let me have an answer to my wish,
Or, by the Lord that made me, you shall
pack,

And never more darken my doors again."
But William answer'd madly, bit his lips,
And broke away. The more he look'd at
her

The less he liked her; and his ways
were harsh;

But Dora bore them meekly. Then be-
fore

The month was out he left his father's
house,

And hired himself to work within the
fields;

And half in love, half spite, he woo'd
and wed

A laborer's daughter, Mary Morrison.

Then, when the bells were ringing,
Allan call'd

His niece and said: "My girl, I love you
well; [son,

But if you speak with him that was my

Or change a word with her he calls his
wife,

My home is none of yours. My will is
law."

And Dora promised, being meek. She
thought,

"It cannot be; my uncle's mind will
change!"

And days went on, and there was born
a boy

To William; then distresses came on
him,

And day by day he passed his father's
gate,

Heart-broken, and his father helped
him not.

But Dora stored what little she could
save,

And sent it them by stealth, nor did
they know

Who sent it; till at last a fever seized
On William, and in harvest time he
died.

Then Dora went to Mary. Mary sat
And look'd with tears upon her boy, and
thought

Hard things of Dora. Dora came and
said:

"I have obey'd my uncle until now,
And I have sinn'd, for it was all thro'
me

This evil came on William at the first.
But, Mary, for the sake of him that's
gone,

And for your sake, the woman that he
chose,

And for this orphan, I am come to you.
You know there has not been for these
five years

So full a harvest. Let me take the boy,
And I will set him in my uncle's eye

Among the wheat; that when his heart
is glad

Of the full harvest, he may see the boy.
And bless him for the sake of him
that's gone."

And Dora took the child, and went
her way

Across the wheat, and sat upon a mound
That was unsown, where many poppies
grew.

Far off the farmer came into the field
And spied her not, for none of all his
men

Dare tell him Dora waited with the
child;

And Dora would have risen and gone to
him, [reap'd,

But her heart fail'd her; and the reapers

And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

But when the morrow came, she rose and took

The child once more, and sat upon the mound ;

And made a little wreath of all the flowers

That grew about, and tied it round his hat

To make him pleasing in her uncle's eye. Then when the farmer pass'd into the field

He spied her, and he left his men at work,

And came and said : " Where were you yesterday ?

Whose child is that ? What are you doing here ? "

So Dora cast her eyes upon the ground, And answer'd softly, " This is William's child ! "

" And did I not," said Allan, " did I not Forbid you, Dora ? " Dora said again :

" Do with me as you will, but take the child,

And bless him for the sake of him that's gone ! "

And Allan said : " I see it is a trick Got up betwixt you and the woman there.

I must be taught my duty, and by you ! You knew my word was law, and yet you dared

To slight it. Well—for I will take the boy ;

But go you hence, and never see me more."

So saying, he took the boy that cried aloud

And struggled hard. The wreath of flowers fell

At Dora's feet. She bow'd upon her hands,

And the boy's cry came to her from the field

More and more distant. She bow'd down her head,

Remembering the day when first she came,

And all the things that had been. She bow'd down

And wept in secret ; and the reapers reap'd,

And the sun fell, and all the land was dark.

Then Dora went to Mary's house, and stood

Upon the threshold. Mary saw the boy

Was not with Dora. She broke out in praise

To God, that help'd her in her widow-hood.

And Dora said : " My uncle took the boy ;

But, Mary, let me live and work with you :

He says that he will never see me more." Then answer'd Mary : " This shall never be,

That thou shouldst take my trouble on thyself ;

And, now I think, he shall not have the boy,

For he will teach him hardness, and to slight

His mother. Therefore thou and I will go,

And I will have my boy, and bring him home ;

And I will beg of him to take thee back. But if he will not take thee back again,

Then thou and I will live within one house,

And work for William's child, until he grows

Of age to help us."

So the women kiss'd Each other, and set out, and reach'd the farm.

The door was off the latch ; they peep'd, and saw

The boy set up betwixt his grandsire's knees,

Who thrust him in the hollows of his arm,

And clapped him on the hands and on the cheeks,

Like one that loved him ; and the lad stretch'd out

And babbled for the golden seal, that hung

From Allan's watch and sparkled by the fire.

Then they came in ; but when the boy beheld

His mother, he cried out to come to her ; And Allan set him down, and Mary said :

" O father !—if you let me call you so—

I never came a-begging for myself, Or William, or this child ; but now I come

For Dora ; take her back, she loves you well.

O Sir, when William died, he died at peace

With all men ; for I ask'd him, and he
said,
He could not ever rue his marrying me—
I had been a patient wife ; but, Sir, he
said

That he was wrong to cross his father
thus.

'God bless him !' he said, 'and may he
never know

The troubles I have gone thro' !' Then
he turn'd

His face and pass'd—unhappy that I
am !

But now, Sir, let me have my boy, for
you

Will make him hard, and he will learn
to slight

His father's memory ; and take Dora
back,

And let all this be as it was before."

So Mary said, and Dora hid her face
By Mary. There was silence in the
room ;

And all at once the old man burst in
sobs :

"I have been to blame—to blame. I
have kill'd my son.

I have kill'd him—but I loved him—my
dear son.

May God forgive me !—I have been to
blame.

Kiss me, my children."

Then they clung about
The old man's neck, and kiss'd him many
times.

And all the man was broken with re-
morse ;

And all his love came back a hundred-
fold ;

And for three hours he sobb'd o'er
William's child

Thinking of William.

So those four abode
Within one house together, and as years

Went forward Mary took another mate ;
But Dora lived unmarried till her death.

About 1835. 1842.

ULYSSES¹

Ir little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren
crag,

Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and
dole

Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and
know not me.

¹ See the *Life of Tennyson*, I, 196.

I cannot rest from travel ; I will drink
Life to the lees. All times I have en-
joy'd

Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with
those

That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and
when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea. I am become a name ;

For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known,—cities of
men

And manners, climates, councils,
governments,

Myself not least, but honor'd of them
all,—

And drunk delight of battle with my
peers,

Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met ;

Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world whose
margin fades

For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,

To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !
As tho' to breathe were life ! Life piled
on life

Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains ; but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something
more,

A bringer of new things : and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard
myself,

And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human
thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the
isle,—

Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labor, by slow prudence to make
mild

A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the
sphere

Of common duties decent, not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I
mine.

There lies the port ; the vessel puffs her
sail ;

There gloom the dark, broad seas. My
mariners,

Souls that have toil'd and wrought, and
 thought with me,—
 That ever with a frolic welcome took
 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
 Free hearts, free foreheads,—you and I
 are old;
 Old age hath yet his honor and his toil.
 Death closes all; but something ere the
 end,
 Some work of noble note, may yet be
 done,
 Not unbecoming men that strove with
 Gods.
 The lights begin to twinkle from the
 rocks;
 The long day wanes; the slow moon
 climbs; the deep
 Moans round with many voices. Come,
 my friends
 'T is not too late to seek a newer world.
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite
 The sounding furrows; for my purpose
 holds
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
 Of all the western stars, until I die.
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us
 down;
 It may be we shall touch the Happy
 Isles, [knew.
 And see the great Achilles whom we
 Tho' much is taken, much abides; and
 tho' [old days
 We are not now that strength which in
 Moved earth and heaven, that which we
 are, we are,—
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong
 in will
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to
 yield. 1842.

LOCKSLEY HALL¹

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while
 as yet 't is early morn;
 Leave me here, and when you want me,
 sound upon the bugle-horn.

'T is the place, and all around it, as of
 old, the curlews call,
 Dreary gleams about the moorland fly-
 ing over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance
 overlooks the sandy tracts,
 And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring
 into cataracts.

¹ See the Life of Tennyson, I, 176 and 195.

Many a night from yonder ivied case-
 ment, ere I went to rest,
 Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly
 to the west.

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising
 thro' the mellow shade,
 Glitter like a swarm of fireflies tangled
 in a silver braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nour-
 ishing a youth sublime
 With the fairy tales of science, and the
 long result of time;

When the centuries behind me like a
 fruitful land reposed;
 When I clung to all the present for the
 promise that it closed;

When I dipped into the future far as hu-
 man eye could see,
 Saw the vision of the world and all the
 wonder that would be.—

In the spring a fuller crimson comes
 upon the robin's breast;
 In the spring the wanton lapwing gets
 himself another crest;

In the spring a livelier iris changes on
 the burnish'd dove;
 In the spring a young man's fancy light-
 ly turns to thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner
 than should be for one so young,
 And her eyes on all my motions with a
 mute observance hung.

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak,
 and speak the truth to me,
 Trust me, cousin, all the current of my
 being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a
 color and a light,
 As I have seen the rosy red flushing in
 the northern night.

And she turn'd—her bosom shaken with
 a sudden storm of sighs—
 All the spirit deeply dawning in the
 dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fear-
 ing they should do me wrong;"
 Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?"
 weeping, "I have loved thee
 long."

Love took up the glass of time, and
turn'd it in his glowing hands ;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself
in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote
on all the chords with might ;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling,
past in music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we
hear the copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses
with the fulness of the spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we
watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the
touching of the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my
Amy, mine no more !
O the dreary, dreary, moorland ! O the
barren, barren shore !

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser
than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile
to a shrewish tongue !

Is it well to wish thee happy ! having
known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a nar-
rower heart than mine !

Yet it shall be ; thou shalt lower to his
level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse
to sympathize with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is ; thou art
mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will
have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall
have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little
dearer than his horse.

What is this ? his eyes are heavy ; think
not they are glazed with wine.
Go to him, it is thy duty ; kiss him,
take his hand in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain
is overwrought ;
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch
him with thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy
things to understand—
Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I
slew thee with my hand !

Better thou and I were lying, hidden
from the heart's disgrace,
Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent
in a last embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin
against the strength of youth !
Cursed be the social lies that warp us
from the living truth !

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from
honest Nature's rule !
Cursed be the gold that gilds the
straiten'd forehead of the fool !

Well—'t is well that I should bluster !—
Hadst thou less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee
more than ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that
which bears but bitter fruit ?
I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my
heart be at the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such
length of years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads
the clanging rookery home.

Where is comfort ? in division of the
records of the mind ?
Can I part her from herself, and love her
as I knew her, kind ?

I remember one that perish'd ; sweetly
did she speak and move ;
Such a one do I remember, whom to look
at was to love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her
for the love she bore ?
No—she never loved me truly ; love is
love for evermore.

Comfort ? comfort scorn'd of devils ! this
is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is re-
membering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it,
lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when
the rain is on the roof.

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and
thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers,
and the shadows rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee,
pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the
tears that thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never,"
whisper'd by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the
ringing of thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking an-
cient kindness on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow; get
thee to thy rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace; for
a tender voice will cry.
'T is a purer life than thine, a lip to drain
thy trouble dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down; my latest
rival brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me
from the mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with
a dearness not his due.
Half is thine and half is his; it will be
worthy of the two.

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy
petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching
down a daughter's heart.

"They were dangerous guides the feel-
ings—she herself was not exempt—
Truly, she herself had suffer'd"—Perish
in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! where-
fore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I
wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to,
lighting upon days like these?
Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens
but to golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all
the markets overflow.
I have but an angry fancy; what is that
which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on
the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapor, and
the winds are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the
hurt that Honor feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarl-
ing at each other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn
that earlier page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou
wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I
felt before the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and
the tumult of my life;

Yearning for the large excitement that
the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he
leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway
near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring
like a dreary dawn;

And his spirit leaps within him to be
gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in
among the throngs of men;

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever
reaping something new;
That which they have done but earnest
of the things that they shall do.

For I dipped into the future, far as human
eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the
wonder that would be;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, ar-
gosies of magic sails,
Pilot of the purple twilight, dropping
down with costly bales;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and
there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling
in the central blue;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the
south-wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plung-
ing thro' the thunder-storm.

Till the war-drum throbbed no longer,
and the battle-flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federa-
tion of the world.

There the common sense of most shall
hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber,
lapped in universal law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping
thro' me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left
me with the jaundiced eye;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things
here are out of joint.
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creep-
ing on from point to point;

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion,
creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks be-
hind a slowly-dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one in-
creasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd
with the process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not har-
vest of his youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for
ever like a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,
and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the
world is more and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers,
and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward
the stillness of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me,
sounding on the bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were
a target for their scorn.

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on
such a moulder'd string?
I am shamed thro' all my nature to have
loved so slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness!
woman's pleasure, woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions
bounded in a shallower brain.

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy
passions, match'd with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as
water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens,
nothing. Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where
my life began to beat,

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my
father evil-starr'd;—
I was left a trampled orphan, and a
selfish uncle's ward.

Or to burst all links of habit—there to
wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gate-
ways of the day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow
moons and happy skies,
Breathths of tropic shade and palms in
cluster, knots of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an
European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland,
swings the trailer from the crag;

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower,
hangs the heavy-fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-
purple spheres of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment
more than in this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the
thoughts that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer
shall have scope and breathing
space;
I will take some savage woman. she
shall rear my dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd, they shall
dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair. and
hurl their lances in the sun;

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap
the rainbows of the brooks.
Not with blinded eyesight poring over
miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I
know my words are wild.
But I count the gray barbarian lower
than the Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant
of our glorious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a
beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to
me were sun or cline!

I the heir of all the ages, in the fore-
most files of time—

I that rather held it better men should
perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like
Joshua's moon in Ajalon!

Not in vain the distance beacons. For-
ward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin for ever down
the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep
into the younger day;
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle
of Cathay.

Mother-Age,—for mine I knew not,—
help me as when life begun;
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash
the lightnings, weigh the sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit
hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well thro'
all my fancy yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long fare-
well to Locksley Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now
for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapor from the margin, black-
ening over heath andholt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its
breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or
hail, or fire or snow;
For the mighty wind arises, roaring sea-
ward, and I go. 1842.

GODIVA

*I waited for the train at Coventry;
I hung with grooms and porters on the
bridge,
To watch the three tall spires; and there
I shaped
The city's ancient legend into this:—
Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel*

Cry down the past, not only we, that
prate

Of rights and wrongs, have loved the
people well,

And loathed to see them overtax'd; but
she

Did more, and underwent, and over-
came,

The woman of a thousand summers back,
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who
ruled

In Coventry; for when he laid a tax
Upon his town, and all the mothers
brought

Their children, clamoring, "If we pay,
we starve!"

She sought her lord, and found him,
where he strode

About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
His beard a foot before him, and his hair
A yard behind. She told him of their
tears.

And pray'd him, "If they pay this tax
they starve."

Whereat he stared, replying, half-
amazed,

"You would not let your little finger
ache

For such *these*?"—"But I would die,"
said she.

He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by
Paul,

Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear:
"O, ay, ay, ay, you talk!"—"Alas!"
she said,

"But prove me what it is I would not
do."

And from a heart as rough as Esau's
hand,

He answer'd, "Ride you naked thro' the
town,

And I repeal it;" and nodding, as in
scorn,

He parted, with great strides among his
dogs.

So left alone, the passions of her mind,
As wind from all the compass shift and
blow.

Made war upon each other for an hour,
Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,

And bade him cry, with sound of drum-
pet, all

The hard condition, but that she would
loose

The people; therefore, as they loved her
well,

From then till noon no foot should pace
the street, [all

No eye look down, she passing, but that

Should keep within, door shut, and wind-
dow barr'd.

Then fled she to her inmost bower, and
there

Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her belt,
The grim Earl's gift; but ever at a
breath:

She linger'd, looking like a summer
moon

Half-dipped in cloud. Anon she shook
her head,

And shower'd the rippled ringlets to her
knee;

Unclad herself in haste; adown the
stair

Stole on; and like a creeping sunbeam
slid

From pillar unto pillar, until she reach'd
The gateway; there she found her pal-
frey trapt

In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.

Then she rode forth, clothed on with
chastity.

The deep air listen'd round her as she
rode,

And all the low wind hardly breathed
for fear.

The little wide-mouth'd heads upon the
spout

Had cunning eyes to see; the barking
cur

Made her cheek flame; her palfrey's
footfall shot

Light horrors thro' her pulses; the blind
walls

Were full of chinks and holes; and over-
head

Fantastic gables, crowding, stared;
but she

Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she
saw

The white-flower'd elder-thicket from
the field

Gleam thro' the Gothic archway in the
wall.

Then she rode back, clothed on with
chastity.

And one low churl, compact of thankless
earth,

The fatal byword of all years to come,
Boring a little auger-hole in fear,

Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had
their will,

Were shrivell'd into darkness in his
head, [who wait

And dropped before him. So the Powers,
On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense mis-
used; [at once,

And she, that knew not, pass'd; and all

With twelve great shocks of sound, the
shameless noon [dred towers,
Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hun-
One after one; but even then she gain'd
Her bower, whence reissuing, robed and
crown'd,

To meet her lord, she took the tax away
And built herself an everlasting name.

1842.

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,

My tough lance thrusteth sure,

My strength is as the strength of ten,

Because my heart is pure.

The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,

The hard brands shiver on the steel,

The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,

The horse and rider reel;

They reel, they roll in clanging lists,

And when the tide of combat stands,

Perfume and flowers fall in showers,

That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend

On whom their favors fall!

For them I battle till the end,

To save from shame and thrall;

But all my heart is drawn above,

My knees are bow'd in crypt and
shrine;

I never felt the kiss of love,

Nor maiden's hand in mine.

More bounteous aspects on me beam,

Me mightier transports move and
thrill;

So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer

A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,

A light before me swims,

Between dark stems the forest glows,

I hear a noise of hymns.

Then by some secret shrine I ride;

I hear a voice, but none are there;

The stalls are void, the doors are wide,

The tapers burning fair.

Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,

The silver vessels sparkle clean,

The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,

And solemn chants resound between

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres

I find a magic bark.

I leap on board; no helmsman steers;

I float till all is dark.

A gentle sound, an awful light!

Three angels bear the Holy Grail;

With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And starlike mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail ;

But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
No branny thicket shelter yields :
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear ;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odors haunt my dreams ;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armor that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
" O just and faithful knight of God !
Ride on ! the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the Holy Grail. 1842.

A FAREWELL

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver ;
No more by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet, then a river ;
Nowhere by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder-tree,
And here thine aspen shiver ;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver ;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever. 1842

THE VISION OF SIN

I

I HAD a vision when the night was late ;
A youth came riding toward a palace-gate.
He rode a horse with wings, that would
have flown,
But that his heavy rider kept him down.
And from the palace came a child of sin,
And took him by the curls, and led him in,
Where sat a company with heated eyes,
Expecting when a fountain should arise.
A sleepy light upon their brows and lips—
As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles
and capes—
Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid
shapes,
By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine,
and piles of grapes.

II

Then methought I heard a mellow
sound,
Gathering up from all the lower ground ;
Narrowing in to where they sat assem-
bled,
Low voluptuous music winding trem-
bled,
Woven in circles. They that heard it
sigh'd,
Panted hand-in-hand with faces pale,
Swung themselves, and in low tones re-
plied ;
Till the fountain spouted, showering
wide
Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail.
Then the music touch'd the gates and
died,
Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale ;
Till thronging in and in, to where they
waited,
As 't were a hundred-throated nightin-
gale,

The strong tempestuous treble throb'd
 and palpitated ;
 Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
 Caught the sparkles, and in circles,
 Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid
 mazes,
 Flung the torrent rainbow round.
 Then they started from their places,
 Moved with violence, changed in hue,
 Caught each other with wild grimaces,
 Half-invisible to the view,
 Wheeling with precipitate paces
 To the melody, till they flew,
 Hair and eyes and limbs and faces,
 Twisted hard in fierce embraces,
 Like to Furies, like to Graces,
 Dash'd together in blinding dew ;
 Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,
 The nerve-dissolving melody
 Fluttered headlong from the sky.

III

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-
 tract,
 That girt the region with high cliff and
 lawn.
 I saw that every morning, far with-
 drawn
 Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
 God made Himself an awful rose of
 dawn,
 Unheeded ; and detaching, fold by fold,
 From those still heights, and, slowly
 drawing near,
 A vapor heavy, hueless, formless, cold,
 Came floating on for many a month and
 year,
 Unheeded ; and I thought I would have
 spoken,
 And warn'd that madman ere it grew
 too late,
 But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine
 was broken,
 When that cold vapor touch'd the palace-
 gate,
 And link'd again. I saw within my
 head
 A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as
 death,
 Who slowly rode across a wither'd
 heath,
 And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said :

IV

“ Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !
 Here is custom come your way ;
 Take my brute, and lead him in,
 Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

“ Bitter barmaid, waning fast !
 See that sheets are on my bed.
 What ! the flower of life is past ;
 It is long before you wed.

“ Slip-shod waiter, lank and sour,
 At the Dragon on the heath !
 Let us have a quiet hour,
 Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

“ I am old, but let me drink ;
 Bring me spices, bring me wine ;
 I remember, when I think,
 That my youth was half divine.

“ Wine is good for shrivell'd lips,
 When a blanket wraps the day.
 When the rotten woodland drips,
 And the leaf is stamp'd in clay.

“ Sit thee down, and have no shame,
 Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee ;
 What care I for any name ?
 What for order or degree ?

“ Let me screw thee up a peg ;
 Let me loose thy tongue with wine ;
 Callest thou that thing a leg ?
 Which is thinnest ? thine or mine ?

“ Thou shalt not be saved by works,
 Thou hast been a sinner too ;
 Ruin'd trunks on wither'd forks,
 Empty scarecrows, I and you !

“ Fill the cup and fill the can,
 Have a rouse before the morn ;
 Every moment dies a man,
 Every moment one is born.

“ We are men of ruin'd blood ;
 Therefore comes it we are wise.
 Fish are we that love the mud,
 Rising to no fancy-flies.

“ Name and fame ! to fly sublime
 Thro' the courts, the camps, the
 schools,
 Is to be the ball of Time,
 Banded by the hands of fools.

“ Friendship !—to be two in one—
 Let the canting liar pack !
 Well I know, when I am gone,
 How she mouths behind my back.

“ Virtue !—to be good and just—
 Every heart, when sifted well,
 Is a clot of warmer dust,
 Mix'd with cunning sparks of hell.

"O, we two as well can look
Whited thought and cleanly life
As the priest, above his book
Leering at his neighbor's wife.

"Fill the cup and fill the can,
Have a rouse before the morn :
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

"Drink, and let the parties rave ;
They are fill'd with idle spleen,
Rising, falling, like a wave,
For they know not what they mean.

"He that roars for liberty
Faster binds a tyrant's power,
And the tyrant's cruel glee
Forces on the freer hour.

"Fill the can and fill the cup ;
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

"Greet her with applause breath,
Freedom, gaily doth she tread ;
In her right a civic wreath,
In her left a human head.

"No, I love not what is new ;
She is of an ancient house,
And I think we know the hue
Of that cap upon her brows.

"Let her go ! her thirst she slakes
Where the bloody conduit runs,
Then her sweetest meal she makes
On the first-born of her sons.

"Drink to lofty hopes that cool,—
Visions of a perfect State ;
Drink we, last, the public fool,
Frantic love and frantic hate.

"Chant me now some wicked stave,
Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

"Fear not thou to loose thy tongue,
Set thy hoary fancies free ;
What is loathsome to the young
Savors well to thee and me.

"Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand

"Tell me tales of thy first love—
April hopes, the fools of chance—
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.

"Fill the can and fill the cup ;
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

"Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads—
Welcome, fellow-citizens,
Hollow hearts and empty heads !

"You are bones, and what of that ?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell'd on a skull.

"Death is king, and Vivat Rex !
Tread a measure on the stones,
Madam—if I know your sex
From the fashion of your bones.

"No, I cannot praise the fire
In your eye—nor yet your lip ;
All the more do I admire
Joints of cunning workmanship.

"Lo ! God's likeness—the ground-
plan—
Neither modell'd, glazed, nor framed ;
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed !

"Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath !
Drink to heavy Ignorance !
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

"Thou art mazed, the night is long,
And the longer night is near—
What ! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.

"Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curl'd ;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.

"Fill the cup and fill the can ;
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !
Dregs of life, and lees of man ;
Yet we will not die forlorn."

V

The voice grew faint ; there came a
further change ;

Once more uprose the mystic mountain range.
 Below were men and horses pierced
 with worms,
 And slowly quickening into lower forms ;
 By shards and scurf of salt, and scum of
 dross,
 Old plash of rains, and refuse patch'd
 with moss.
 Then some one spake : " Behold ! it was
 a crime
 Of sense avenged by sense that wore
 with time."
 Another said : " The crime of sense be-
 came
 The crime of malice, and is equal blame."
 And one : " He had not wholly quench'd
 his power ;
 A little grain of conscience made him
 sour."
 At last I heard a voice upon the slope
 Cry to the summit, " Is there any hope ?"
 To which an answer peal'd from that
 high land,
 But in a tongue no man could under-
 stand ;
 And on the glimmering limit far with-
 drawn
 God made Himself an awful rose of
 dawn. 1842.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

BREAK, break, break,
 On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !
 And I would that my tongue could utter
 The thoughts that arise in me.
 O, well for the fisherman's boy,
 That he shouts with his sister at play !
 O, well for the sailor lad,
 That he sings in his boat on the bay !
 And the stately ships go on
 To their haven under the hill ;
 But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
 And the sound of a voice that is still !
 Break, break, break,
 At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
 But the tender grace of a day that is
 dead
 Will never come back to me. 1842.

THE POET'S SONG

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
 He pass'd by the town and out of the
 street ;

A light wind blew from the gates of
 the sun,
 And waves of shadow went over the
 wheat ;
 And he sat him down in a lonely place,
 And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
 That made the wild-swan pause in her
 cloud,
 And the lark drop down at his feet.
 The swallow stopped as he hunted the fly,
 The snake slipped under a spray,
 The wild hawk stood with the down on
 his beak,
 And stared, with his foot on the prey ;
 And the nightingale thought, " I have
 sung many songs,
 But never a one so gay,
 For he sings of what the world will be
 When the years have died away." 1842.

LYRICS FROM THE PRINCESS

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what
 they mean,
 Tears from the depth of some divine de-
 spair
 Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
 In looking on the happy autumn-fields,
 And thinking of the days that are no
 more.
 Fresh as the first beam glittering on
 a sail,
 That brings our friends up from the
 underworld,
 Sad as the last which reddens over one
 That sinks with all we love below the
 verge ;
 So sad, so fresh, the days that are no
 more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark sum-
 mer dawns
 The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
 To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
 The casement slowly grows a glimmer-
 ing square ;
 So sad, so strange, the days that are no
 more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
 And sweet as those by hopeless fancy
 feign'd
 On lips that are for others ; deep as love,
 Deep as first love, and wild with all re-
 gret ;
 O Death in Life, the days that are no
 more !

O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying
south,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

O, tell her, Swallow, thou that know-
est each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the
South,
And dark and true and tender is the
North.

O Swallow, Swallow, if I could fol-
low, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million
loves.

O, were I thou that she might take
me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died !

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart
with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are
green ?

O, tell her, Swallow, that thy brood
is flown ;
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is
made.

O, tell her, brief is life but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the
North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the
South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden
woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and
make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.

As thro' the land at eve we went,
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O, we fell out, I know not why,
And kiss'd again with tears.
And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears !
For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,

There above the little grave,
O, there above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea !
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me :
While my little one, while my pretty one,
sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon ;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon ;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon ;
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty
one, sleep.

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story ;
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes
flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying,
dying, dying.

O, hark, O, hear ! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going !
O, sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !
Blow, let us hear the purple glens reply-
ing,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying,
dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river ;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes
flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dy-
ing, dying.

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums
That beat to battle where he stands ;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands.

A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

Home they brought her warrior dead;
She nor swoon'd nor utter'd cry.
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stepped,
Took the face-cloth from the face;
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee—
Like summer tempest came her tears—
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

Ask me no more: the moon may draw
the sea;

The cloud may stoop from heaven and
take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of
cape;
But O too fond, when have I answer'd
thee?

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I
give?

I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee
die!

Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee
live;

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are
seal'd;

I strove against the stream and all in
vain;

Let the great river take me to the
main.

No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;
Ask me no more.

1847-1850.¹

¹ The first two of these lyrics, included in the body of the work, were published in the original edition, 1847; the others, inserted between the sections of the poem, were first given in the edition of 1850.

IN MEMORIAM A. H. H.

OBITU M DCCCXXXIII¹

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest Life in man and brute;
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust;
Thou madest man, he knows not why,
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou.
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be;
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know,
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight;
We mock thee when we do not fear:
But help thy foolish ones to bear;
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seem'd my sin in me,
What seem'd my worth since I began;
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

¹ Arthur Henry Hallam, Tennyson's closest friend, and betrothed to Tennyson's sister Emily, died at Vienna, September 15, 1833. See the *Life of Tennyson*, I., 49-55, 75-83, 104-108; and 295-327.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth;
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

1849.¹

III

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,
O sweet and bitter in a breath.
What whispers from thy lying lip?

"The stars," she whispers, "blindly run;
A web is woven across the sky;
From out waste places comes a cry,
And murmurs from the dying sun;

"And all the phantom, Nature, stands—
With all the music in her tone,
A hollow echo of my own,—
A hollow form with empty hands."

And shall I take a thing so blind,
Embrace her as my natural good;
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,
Upon the threshold of the mind?

V

I sometimes hold it half a sin
To put in words the grief I feel;
For words, like Nature, half reveal
And half conceal the Soul within.

But, for the unquiet heart and brain,
A use in measured language lies;
The sad mechanic exercise,
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain.

In words, like weeds, I'll wrap me o'er
Like coarsest clothes against the cold;
But that large grief which these en-
fold

Is given in outline and no more.

¹It must be particularly noticed that this introductory poem was among the *last written* of those which make up *In Memoriam*. The early parts begin with No. II. or No. III.

On the development of thought and feeling in the poem as a whole, which is fully shown in the parts here given, see Thomas Davidson's *Prolegomena to In Memoriam*, Alfred Gatty's *Key to In Memoriam*, and J. F. Genung's *In Memoriam*. See also the special Bibliography, p. 400.

VI

One writes, that "other friends remain,"
That "loss is common to the race"—
And common is the commonplace,
And vacant chaff well meant for grain.

That loss is common would not make
My own less bitter, rather more.
Too common! Never morning wore
To evening, but some heart did break.

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,
Who pledgedst now thy gallant son,
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
Hath still'd the life that beat from thee.

O mother, praying God will save
Thy sailor,—while thy head is bow'd,
His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

Ye know no more than I who wrought
At that last hour to please him well;
Who mused on all I had to tell,
And something written, something
thought;

Expecting still his advent home;
And ever met him on his way
With wishes, thinking, "here to-day,"
Or "here to-morrow will he come."

O, somewhere, meek, unconscious dove,
That sittest ranging golden hair;
And glad to find thyself so fair,
Poor child, that waitest for thy love!

For now her father's chimney glows
In expectation of a guest;
And thinking "this will please him
best,"
She takes a riband or a rose;

For he will see them on to-night;
And with the thought her color burns;
And, having left the glass, she turns
Once more to set a ringlet right;

And, even when she turn'd, the curse
Had fallen, and her future lord
Was drown'd in passing thro' the ford,
Or kill'd in falling from his horse.

O, what to her shall be the end?
And what to me remains of good?
To her perpetual maidenhood,
And unto me no second friend.

VII

Dark house, by which once more I stand
Here in the long unlovely street,
Doors, where my heart was used to
beat

So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clasp'd no more—
Behold me, for I cannot sleep,
And like a guilty thing I creep
At earliest morning to the door.

He is not here ; but far away
The noise of life begins again,
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
On the bald street breaks the blank day.

W

IX

Fair ship, that from the Italian shore
Sallest the placid ocean-plains
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er.

So draw him home to those that mourn
In vain ; a favorable speed
Ruffle thy mirror'd mast, and lead
Thro' prosperous floods his holy urn.

All night no ruder air perplex
Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright
As our pure love, thro' early light
Shall glimmer on the dewy decks.

Sphere all your lights around, above ;
Sleep, gentle heavens, before the
prow ;

Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps now,
My friend, the brother of my love ;

My Arthur, whom I shall not see
Till all my widow'd race be run ;
Dear as the mother to the son,
More than my brothers are to me.

W

X

I hear the noise about thy keel ;
I hear the bell struck in the night ;
I see the cabin-window bright ;
I see the sailor at the wheel.

Thou bring'st the sailor to his wife,
And travell'd men from foreign lands ;
And letters unto trembling hands ;
And thy dark freight, a vanish'd life.

So bring him ; we have idle dreams ;
This look of quiet flatters thus
Our home-bred fancies. O, to us,
The fools of habit, sweeter seems

To rest beneath the clover sod,
That takes the sunshine and the rains,
Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
The chalice of the grapes of God ;

Than if with thee the roaring wells
Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine,
And hands so often clasp'd in mine,
Should toss with tangle and with shells.

W

XI

Calm is the morn without a sound,
Calm as to suit a calmer grief.
And only thro' the faded leaf
The chestnut pattering to the ground ;

Calm and deep peace on this high wold,
And on these dews that drench the
furze,
And all the silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold ;

Calm and still light on yon great plain
That sweeps with all its autumn
bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening
towers,
To mingle with the bounding main ;

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
These leaves that redden to the fall,
And in my heart, if calm at all,
If any calm, a calm despair ;

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
And waves that sway themselves in
rest,
And dead calm in that noble breast
Which heaves but with the heaving
deep.

XIII

Tears of the widower, when he sees
A late-lost form that sleep reveals,
And moves his doubtful arms, and
feels
Her place is empty, fall like these ;

Which weep a loss for ever new,
A void where heart on heart reposed ;
And, where warm hands have prest
and closed,
Silence, till I be silent too ;

Which weep the comrade of my choice,
An awful thought, a life removed,
The human-hearted man I loved,
A Spirit, not a breathing voice.

Come, Time, and teach me, many years,
I do not suffer in a dream ;
For now so strange do these things
seem,

Mine eyes have leisure for their tears,

My fancies time to rise on wing,
And glance about the approaching
sails,
As tho' they brought but merchants'
bales,
And not the burthen that they bring.

XIV

If one should bring me this report,
That thou hadst touch'd the land to-
day,
And I went down unto the quay,
And found thee lying in the port ;

And standing, muffled round with woë,
Should see thy passengers in rank
Come stepping lightly down the
plank,
And beckoning unto those they know ;

And if along with these should come
The man I held as half-divine,
Should strike a sudden hand in mine,
And ask a thousand things of home ;

And I should tell him all my pain,
And how my life had droop'd of late,
And he should sorrow o'er my state
And marvel what possess'd my brain ;

And I perceived no touch of change,
No hint of death in all his frame,
But found him all in all the same,
I should not feel it to be strange.

W

XVIII

'T is well ; 't is something ; we may
stand
Where he in English earth is laid,
And from his ashes may be made
The violet of his native land.

'T is little ; but it looks in truth
As if the quiet bones were blest
Among familiar names to rest
And in the places of his youth.

Come then, pure hands, and bear the
head
That sleeps or wears the mask of sleep,
And come, whatever loves to weep,
And hear the ritual of the dead.

Ah yet, even yet, if this might be,
I, falling on his faithful heart,
Would breathing thro' his lips impart
The life that almost dies in me ;

That dies not, but endures with pain,
And slowly forms the firmer mind,
Treasuring the look it cannot find,
The words that are not heard again.

W

XIX

The Danube to the Severn gave
The darken'd heart that beat no more,
They laid him by the pleasant shore,
And in the hearing of the wave.

There twice a day the Severn fills ;
The salt sea-water passes by,
And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills.

The Wye is hush'd nor moved along,
And hush'd my deepest grief of all,
When fill'd with tears that cannot
fall,
I brim with sorrow drowning song.

The tide flows down, the wave again
Is vocal in its wooded walls ;
My deeper anguish also falls,
And I can speak a little then.

W

XXI

I sing to him that rests below,
And, since the grasses round me wave,
I take the grasses of the grave,
And make them pipes whereon to blow.

The traveller hears me now and then,
And sometimes harshly will he speak :
" This fellow would make weakness
weak,
And melt the waxen hearts of men "

Another answers : " Let him be,
He loves to make parade of pain,
That with his piping he may gain
The praise that comes to constancy."

A third is wroth : " Is this an hour
For private sorrow's barren song,
When more and more the people throng
The chairs and thrones of civil power ?

" A time to sicken and to swoon,
When Science reaches forth her arms
To feel from world to world, and
charms
Her secret from the latest moon ? "

Behold, ye speak an idle thing ;
 Ye never knew the sacred dust.
 I do but sing because I must,
 And pipe but as the linnets sing ;

And one is glad ; her note is gay,
 For now her little ones have ranged ;
 And one is sad ; her note is changed,
 Because her brood is stolen away.

XXIII

Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut,
 Or breaking into song by fits,
 Alone, alone, to where he sits,
 The Shadow cloak'd from head to foot,

Who keeps the keys of all the creeds,
 I wander, often falling lame,
 And looking back to whence I came,
 Or on to where the pathway leads ;

And crying, How changed from where
 it ran
 Thro' lands where not a leaf was
 dumb,
 But all the lavish hills would hum
 The murmur of a happy Pan ;

When each by turns was guide to each,
 And Fancy light from Fancy caught,
 And Thought, leaped out to wed with
 Thought
 Ere Thought could wed itself with
 Speech ;

And all we met was fair and good,
 And all was good that Time could
 bring.
 And all the secret of the Spring
 Moved in the chambers of the blood ;

And many an old philosophy
 On Argive heights divinely sang,
 And round us all the thicket rang
 To many a flute of Arcady.

XXVII

I envy not in any moods
 The captive void of noble rage,
 The linnet born within the cage,
 That never knew the summer woods ;

I envy not the beast that takes
 His license in the field of time,
 Unfetter'd by the sense of crime,
 To whom a conscience never wakes ;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
 The heart that never plighted troth

But stagnates in the weeds of sloth ;
 Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall ;
 I feel it, when I sorrow most ;
 'T is better to have loved and lost
 Than never to have loved at all.

XXVIII

The time draws near the birth of Christ.
 The moon is hid, the night is still ;
 The Christmas bells from hill to hill
 Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,
 From far and near, on mead and moor,
 Swell out and fail, as if a door
 Were shut between me and the sound ;

Each voice four changes on the wind,
 That now dilate, and now decrease,
 Peace and goodwill, goodwill and
 peace,
 Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept, and woke with pain,
 I almost wish'd no more to wake,
 And that my hold on life would break
 Before I heard those bells again ;

But they my troubled spirit rule,
 For they controll'd me when a boy ;
 They bring me sorrow touch'd with
 joy,
 The merry, merry bells of Yule.

XXX

With trembling fingers did we weave
 The holly round the Christmas hearth ;
 A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,
 And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall
 We gamboll'd, making vain pretence
 Of gladness, with an awful sense
 Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused : the winds were in the
 beech ;
 We heard them sweep the winter
 land ;
 And in a circle hand-in-hand
 Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang ;
 We sung, tho' every eye was dim,
 A merry song we sang with him
 Last year ; impetuously we sang.

We ceased ; a gentler feeling crept
 Upon us : surely rest is meet.
 "They rest," we said, "their sleep is
 sweet,"
 And silence follow'd, and we wept.

Our voices took a higher range ;
 Once more we sang : "They do not die
 Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
 Nor change to us, although they change ;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail
 With gather'd power, yet the same,
 Pierces the keen seraphic flame
 From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
 Draw forth the cheerful day from
 night :

O Father, touch the east, and light
 The light that shone when Hope was
 born.

XXXI

When Lazarus left his charnel-cave,
 And home to Mary's house return'd,
 Was this demanded—if he yearn'd
 To hear her weeping by his grave?

"Where wert thou, brother, those four
 days?"

There lives no record of reply,
 Which telling what it is to die
 Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbors met,
 The streets were fill'd with joyful
 sound,

A solemn gladness even crown'd
 The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ !
 The rest remaineth unreveal'd ;
 He told it not, or something seal'd
 The lips of that Evangelist.

XXXII

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
 Nor other thought her mind admits
 But, he was dead, and there he sits,
 And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
 All other, when her ardent gaze
 Roves from the living brother's face,
 And rests upon the Life indeed.

All subtle thought, all curious fears,
 Borne down by gladness so complete,
 She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
 With costly spikenard and with tears.

Thrice blest whose lives are faithful
 prayers,
 Whose loves in higher love endure ;
 What souls possess themselves so pure,
 Or is there blessedness like theirs?

w XXXIII

O thou that after toil and storm
 Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer
 air,

Whose faith has centre everywhere,
 Nor cares to fix itself to form,

Leave thou thy sister, when she prays,
 Her early heaven, her happy views ;
 Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse
 A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,
 Her hands are quicker unto good.
 O, sacred be the flesh and blood
 To which she links a truth divine !

See thou, that countest reason ripe
 In holding by the law within,
 Thou fail not in a world of sin,
 And even for want of such a type.

XL

Could we forget the widow'd hour
 And look on Spirits breathed away,
 As on a maiden in the day
 When first she wears her orange-flower !

When crown'd with blessing she doth
 rise
 To take her latest leave of home,
 And hopes and light regrets that come
 Make April of her tender eyes ;

And doubtful joys the father move,
 And tears are on the mother's face,
 As parting with a long embrace
 She enters other realms of love :

Her office there to rear, to teach,
 Becoming as is meet and fit
 A link among the days, to knit
 The generations each with each ;

And, doubtless, unto thee is given
 A life that bears immortal fruit
 In those great offices that suit
 The full-grown energies of heaven.

Ay me, the difference I discern !
 How often shall her old fireside
 Be cheer'd with tidings of the bride,
 How often she herself return,

And tell them all they would have told,
And bring her babe, and make her
boast,

Till even those that miss'd her most
Shall count new things as dear as old ;

But thou and I have shaken hands,
Till growing winters lay me low ;
My paths are in the fields I know,
And thine in undiscover'd lands.

XLVIII

If these brief lays, of Sorrow born,
Were taken to be such as closed
Grave doubts and answers here pro-
posed,
Then these were such as men might
scorn.

Her care is not to part and prove ;
She takes, when harsher moods re-
mit,
What slender shade of doubt may flit,
And makes it vassal unto love ;

And hence, indeed, she sports with words,
But better serves a wholesome law,
And holds it sin and shame to draw
The deepest measure from the chords ;

Nor dare she trust a larger lay,
But rather lessens from the lip
Short swallow-flights of song, that dip
Their wings in tears, and skim away.

W LIV

O, yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood ;

That nothing walks with aimless feet ;
That not one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete ;

That not a worm is cloven in vain ;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything ;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream ; but what am I ?
An infant crying in the night ;
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry.

W LV

The wish, that of the living whole
No life may fail beyond the grave,
Derives it not from what we have
The likeliest God within the soul ?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams ?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life,

That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

W LVI

"So careful of the type?" but no.
From scarp'd cliff and quarried stone
She cries, "A thousand types are gone ;
I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me :
I bring to life, I bring to death ;
The spirit does but mean the breath :
I know no more." And he, shall he,

Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer,

Who trusted God was love indeed
And love Creation's final law—
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravine, shriek'd against his creed—

Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,
Who battled for the True, the Just,
Be blown about the desert dust,
Or seal'd within the iron hills ?

No more? A monster then, a dream,
A discord. Dragons of the prime,
That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music match'd with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail !
O for thy voice to soothe and bless !
What hope of answer, or redress ?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.

LVII

Peace; come away : the song of woe
Is after all an earthly song.
Peace; come away : we do him wrong
To sing so wildly : let us go.

Come; let us go : your cheeks are pale;
But half my life I leave behind.
Methinks my friend is richly shrined;
But I shall pass, my work will fail.

Yet in these ears, till hearing dies,
One set slow bell will seem to toll
The passing of the sweetest soul
That ever look'd with human eyes.

I hear it now, and o'er and o'er,
Eternal greetings to the dead;
And "Ave, Ave, Ave," said,
"Adieu, adieu," for evermore.

LVIII

In those sad words I took farewell.
Like echoes in sepulchral halls,
As drop by drop the water falls
In vaults and catacombs, they fell;

And, falling, idly broke the peace
Of hearts that beat from day to day,
Half-conscious of their dying clay,
And those cold crypts where they shall
cease.

The high Muse answer'd : "Wherefore
grieve
Thy brethren with a fruitless tear?
Abide a little longer here,
And thou shalt take a nobler leave."

LXIV

Dost thou look back on what hath been,
As some divinely gifted man,
Whose life in low estate began
And on a simple village green;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,
And breasts the blows of circumstance,
And grapples with his evil star;

Who makes by force his merit known
And lives to clutch the golden keys,
To mould a mighty state's decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne;

And moving up from high to higher,
Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope
The pillar of a people's hope,
The center of a world's desire;

Yet feels, as in a pensive dream,
When all his active powers are still,
A distant dearness in the hill,
A secret sweetness in the stream,

The limit of his narrower fate,
While yet beside its vocal springs
He play'd at counsellors and kings
With one that was his earliest mate;

Who ploughs with pain his native lea
And reaps the labor of his hands,
Or in the furrow musing stands :
"Does my old friend remember me?"

LXXVII

When on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest
By that broad water of the west
There comes a glory on the walls :

Thy marble bright in dark appears,
As slowly steals a silver flame
Along the letters of thy name,
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away,
From off my bed the moonlight dies;
And closing eaves of wearied eyes
I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray;

And then I know the mist is drawn
A lucid veil from coast to coast,
And in the dark church like a ghost
Thy tablet glimmers in the dawn.

LXXIV

As sometimes in a dead man's face,
To those that watch it more and more,
A likeness, hardly seen before,
Comes out—to some one of his race;

So, dearest, now thy brows are cold,
I see thee what thou art, and know
Thy likeness to the wise below,
Thy kindred with the great of old.

But there is more than I can see,
And what I see I leave unsaid,
Nor speak it, knowing Death has made
His darkness beautiful with thee.

LXXVIII

Again at Christmas did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth;
The silent snow possess'd the earth,
And calmly fell our Christmas-eve.

The yule-clog sparkled keen with frost,
 No wing of wind the region swept,
 But over all things brooding slept
 The quiet sense of something lost.

As in the winters left behind,
 Again our ancient games had place,
 The mimic picture's breathing grace,
 And dance and song and hoodman-blind.

Who show'd a token of distress?
 No single tear, no mark of pain—
 O sorrow, then can sorrow wane?
 O grief, can grief be changed to less?

O last regret, regret can die!
 No—mixed with all this mystic frame,
 Her deep relations are the same,
 But with long use her tears are dry.

LXXXIII

Dip down upon the northern shore,
 O sweet new-year delaying long;
 Thou doest expectant Nature wrong;
 Delaying long, delay no more.

What stays thee from the clouded noons,
 Thy sweetness from its proper place;
 Can trouble live with April days,
 Or sadness in the summer moons?

Bring orchis, bring the foxglove spire,
 The little speedwell's darling blue,
 Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,
 Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire.

O thou, new-year, delaying long,
 Delayest the sorrow in my blood,
 That longs to burst a frozen bud
 And flood a fresher throat with song.

LXXXV

This truth came borne with bier and pall,
 I felt it, when I sorrow'd most,
 'T is better to have loved and lost,
 Than never to have loved at all...

O true in word, and tried in deed,
 Demanding, so to bring relief
 To this which is our common grief,
 What kind of life is that I lead;

And whether trust in things above
 Be dimm'd of sorrow, or sustain'd;
 And whether love for him have drain'd
 My capabilities of love;

Your words have virtue such as draws
 A faithful answer from the breast,

Thro' light reproaches, half expressed
 And loyal unto kindly laws.

My blood an even tenor kept,
 Till on mine ear this message falls,
 That in Vienna's fatal walls
 God's finger touch'd him, and he slept.

The great Intelligences fair
 That range above our mortal state,
 In circle round the blessed gate,
 Received and gave him welcome there

And led him thro' the blissful climes,
 And show'd him in the fountain fresh
 All knowledge that the sons of flesh
 Shall gather in the cycléd times.

But I remain'd, whose hopes were dim,
 Whose life, whose thoughts were little
 worth,
 To wander on a darken'd earth,
 Where all things round me breathed of
 him.

O friendship, equal-poised control,
 O heart, with kindest motion warm,
 O sacred essence, other form,
 O solemn ghost, O crowned soul!

Yet none could better know than I,
 How much of act at human hands
 The sense of human will demands
 By which we dare to live or die.

Whatever way my days decline,
 I felt and feel, tho' left alone,
 His being working in mine own,
 The footsteps of his life in mine;

A life that all the Muses deck'd
 With gifts of grace, that might express
 All-comprehensive tenderness,
 All-subtilizing intellect:

And so my passion hath not swerved
 To works of weakness, but I find
 An image comforting the mind,
 And in my grief a strength reserved.

Likewise the imaginative woe,
 That loved to handle spiritual strife,
 Diffused the shock thro' all my life,
 But in the present broke the blow.

My pulses therefore beat again
 For other friends that once I met;
 Nor can it suit me to forget
 The mighty hopes that make us men.

I woo your love : I count it crime
To mourn for any overmuch ;
I, the divided half of such
A friendship as had master'd Time ;

Which masters Time indeed, and is
Eternal, separate from fears.
The all-assuming months and years
Can take no part away from this ;

But Summer on the steaming floods,
And Spring that swells the narrow
brooks,

And Autumn, with a noise of rooks,
That gather in the waning woods,

And every pulse of wind and wave
Recalls, in change of light or gloom,
My old affection of the tomb,
And my prime passion in the grave.

My old affection of the tomb,
A part of stillness, yearns to speak :
" Arise, and get thee forth and seek
A friendship for the years to come.

" I watch thee from the quiet shore ;
Thy spirit up to mine can reach ;
But in dear words of human speech
We two communicate no more."

And I, " Can clouds of nature stain
The starry clearness of the free ?
How is it ? Canst thou feel for me
Some painless sympathy with pain ?"

And lightly does the whisper fall :
" 'T is hard for thee to fathom this ;
I triumph in conclusive bliss,
And that serene result of all."

So hold I commerce with the dead ;
Or so methinks the dead would say ;
Or so shall grief with symbols play
And pining life be fancy-fed.

Now looking to some settled end,
That those things pass, and I shall prove
A meeting somewhere, love with love,
I crave your pardon, O my friend ;

If not so fresh, with love as true,
I, clasping brother-hands, aver
I could not, if I would, transfer
The whole I felt for him to you.

For which be they that hold apart
The promise of the golden hours ?
First love, first friendship, equal
powers,
That marry with the virgin heart.

Still mine, that cannot but deplore,
That beats within a lonely place,
That yet remembers his embrace,
But at his footstep leaps no more,

My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest
Quite in the love of what is gone,
But seeks to beat in time with one
That warms another living breast.

Ah, take the imperfect gift I bring,
Knowing the primrose yet is dear,
The primrose of the later year,
As not unlike to that of Spring.

W LXXXVI

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,
That rollest from the gorgeous gloom
Of evening over brake and bloom
And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below
Thro' all the dewy tassell'd wood,
And shadowing down the horned flood
In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh
The full new life that feeds thy breath
Throughout my frame, till Doubt and
Death,
Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas
On leagues of odor streaming far,
To where in yonder orient star
A hundred spirits whisper " Peace."

W LXXXVII

I past beside the reverend walls
In which of old I wore the gown ;
I roved at random thro' the town,
And saw the tumult of the halls ;

And heard once more in college fanes
The storm their high-built organs
make,
And thunder-music, rolling, shake
The prophet blazon'd on the panes ;

And caught once more the distant shout,
The measured pulse of racing oars
Among the willows : paced the shores
And many a bridge, and all about.

The same gray flats again, and felt
The same, but not the same ; and last
Up that long walk of limes I past
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door.
 I linger'd ; all within was noise
 Of songs, and clapping hands, and
 boys
 That crash'd the glass and beat the floor ;

Where once we held debate, a band
 Of youthful friends, on mind and art,
 And labor, and the changing mart,
 And all the framework of the land ;

When one would aim an arrow fair,
 But send it slackly from the string ;
 And one would pierce an outer ring,
 And one an inner, here and there ;

And last the master-bowman, he,
 Would cleave the mark. A willing
 ear
 We lent him. Who but hung to hear
 The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and
 grace
 And music in the bounds of law,
 To those conclusions when we saw
 The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow
 In azure orbits heavenly-wise ;
 And over those ethereal eyes
 The bar of Michael Angelo ?

W LXXXVIII

Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet,
 Rings Eden thro' the budded quicks,
 O, tell me where the senses mix,
 O, tell me where the passions meet,

Whence radiate : fierce extremes em-
 ploy
 Thy spirits in the darkening leaf,
 And in the midmost heart of grief
 Thy passion clasps a secret joy ;

And I—my harp would prelude woe—
 I cannot all command the strings ;
 The glory of the sum of things
 Will flash along the chords and go.

XCVI

You say, but with no touch of scorn,
 Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue
 eyes
 Are tender over drowning flies,
 You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not : one indeed I knew
 In many a subtle question versed,

Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,
 But ever strove to make it true ;

Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds,
 At last he beat his music out.
 There lives more faith in honest doubt,
 Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd
 strength,
 He would not make his judgment
 blind,
 He faced the spectres of the mind
 And laid them ; thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own,
 And Power was with him in the night,
 Which makes the darkness and the
 light,
 And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,
 As over Sinai's peaks of old,
 While Israel made their gods of gold,
 Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

W XCVII

My love has talk'd with rocks and trees ;
 He finds on misty mountain-ground
 His own vast shadow glory-crown'd ;
 He sees himself in all he sees.

Two partners of a married life—
 I look'd on these and thought of thee
 In vastness and in mystery,
 And of my spirit as of a wife.

These two—they dwelt with eye on eye,
 Their hearts of old have beat in tune,
 Their meetings made December June,
 Their every parting was to die.

Their love has never past away ;
 The days she never can forget
 Are earnest that he loves her yet,
 Whate'er the faithless people say.

Her life is lone, he sits apart ;
 He loves her yet, she will not weep,
 Tho' rapt in matters dark and deep
 He seems to slight her simple heart.

He thrids the labyrinth of the mind,
 He reads the secret of the star,
 He seems so near and yet so far,
 He looks so cold : she thinks him kind.

She keeps the gift of years before,
 A wither'd violet is her bliss ;
 She knows not what his greatness is,
 For that, for all, she loves him more.

For him she plays, to him she sings
Of early faith and plighted vows;
She knows but matters of the house,
And he, he knows a thousand things.

Her faith is fixed and cannot move,
She darkly feels him great and wise.
She dwells on him with faithful eyes,
"I cannot understand; I love."

W

CII

We leave the well-beloved place
Where first we gazed upon the sky;
The roofs that heard our earliest cry
Will shelter one of stranger race.

We go, but ere we go from home,
As down the garden-walks I move,
Two spirits of a diverse love
Contend for loving masterdom.

One whispers, "Here thy boyhood sung
Long since its matin song, and heard
The low love-language of the bird
In native hazels tassel-hung."

The other answers, "Yea, but here
Thy feet have stray'd in after hours
With thy lost friend among the
bowers,
And this hath made them trebly dear."

These two have striven half the day,
And each prefers his separate claim,
Poor rivals in a losing game,
That will not yield each other way.

I turn to go; my feet are set
To leave the pleasant fields and
farms;
They mix in one another's arms
To one pure image of regret.

W

CIV

The time draws near the birth of Christ;
The moon is hid, the night is still;
A single church below the hill
Is pealing, folded in the mist.

A single peal of bells below,
That wakens at this hour of rest
A single murmur in the breast,
That these are not the bells I know.

Like strangers' voices here they sound,
In lands where not a memory strays,
Nor landmark breathes of other days,
But all is new unhallow'd ground.

W

CVI

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor;
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times
Ring out, ring out my mournful
rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

W

CVIII

I will not shut me from my kind,
And, lest I stiffen into stone,
I will not eat my heart alone,
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind:

What profit lies in barren faith,
And vacant yearning, tho' with might
To scale the heaven's highest height,
Or dive below the wells of death?

What find I in the highest place,
But mine own phantom chanting
hymns?
And on the depths of death there
swims
The reflex of a human face.

I'll rather take what fruit may be
Of sorrow under human skies :
'T is held that sorrow makes us wise,
Whatever wisdom sleep with thee.

CXI

The churl in spirit, up or down
Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,
To him who grasps a golden ball,
By blood a king, at heart a clown,—

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil
His want in forms for fashion's sake,
Will let his coltish nature break
At seasons thro' the gilded pale ;

For who can always act? but he,
To whom a thousand memories call,
Not being less but more than all
The gentleness he seem'd to be,

Best seem'd the thing he was, and join'd
Each office of the social hour
To noble manners, as the flower
And native growth of noble mind ;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,
Or villain fancy fleeting by,
Drew in the expression of an eye
Where God and Nature met in light ;

And thus he bore without abuse
The grand old name of gentleman,
Defamed by every charlatan,
And soil'd with all ignoble use.

CXIII

'T is held that sorrow makes us wise ;
Yet how much wisdom sleeps with
thee
Which not alone had guided me,
But served the seasons that may rise ;

For can I doubt, who knew thee keen
In intellect, with force and skill
To strive, to fashion, to fulfil—
I doubt not what thou wouldst have
been :

A life in civic action warm,
A soul on highest mission sent,
A potent voice of Parliament,
A pillar steadfast in the storm,

Should licensed boldness gather force,
Becoming, when the time has birth,
A lever to uplift the earth
And roll it in another course,

With thousand shocks that come and
go,
With agonies, with energies,
With overthrowings, and with cries,
And undulations to and fro.

CXIV

Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall
rail
Against her beauty? May she mix
With men and prosper! Who shall
fix
Her pillars? Let her work prevail.

But on her forehead sits a fire ;
She sets her forward countenance
And leaps into the future chance,
Submitting all things to desire.

Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain—
She cannot fight the fear of death.
What is she, cut from love and faith,
But some wild Pallas from the brain

Of demons? fiery-hot to burst
All barriers in her onward race
For power. Let her know her place ;
She is the second, not the first.

A higher hand must make her mild,
If all be not in vain, and guide
Her footsteps, moving side by side
With Wisdom, like the younger child ;

For she is earthly of the mind,
But Wisdom heavenly of the soul.
O friend, who camest to thy goal
So early, leaving me behind,

I would the great world grew like thee,
Who grewest not alone in power
And knowledge, but by year and hour
In reverence and in charity.

CXV

Now fades the last long streak of snow,
Now burgeons every maze of quick
About the flowering squares, and
thick
By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drown'd in yonder living blue
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
The flocks are whiter down the vale,
And milkier every milky sail
On winding stream or distant sea.

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives
 In yonder greenening gleam, and fly
 The happy birds, that change their
 sky
 To build and brood, that live their lives
 From land to land; and in my breast
 Spring wakens too, and my regret
 Becomes an April violet,
 And buds and blossoms like the rest.

CXVIII

Contemplate all this work of Time,
 The giant laboring in his youth;
 Nor dream of human love and truth,
 As dying Nature's earth and lime;

But trust that those we call the dead
 Are breathers of an ampler day
 For ever nobler ends. They say,
 The solid earth whereon we tread

In tracts of fluent heat began,
 And grew to seeming-random forms.
 The seeming prey of cyclic storms,
 Till at the last arose the man;

Who throve and branch'd from clime to
 clime,
 The herald of a higher race,
 And of himself in higher place,
 If so he type this work of time

Within himself, from more to more;
 Or, crown'd with attributes of woe
 Like glories, move his course, and
 show
 That life is not as idle ore,

But iron dug from central gloom,
 And heated hot with burning fears,
 And dipped in baths of hissing tears,
 And batter'd with the shocks of doom

To shape and use. Arise and fly
 The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
 Move upward, working out the beast,
 And let the ape and tiger die.

CXIX

There rolls the deep where grew the
 tree.
 O earth, what changes hast thou seen!
 There where the long street roarshath
 been
 The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow
 From form to form, and nothing
 stands;

They melt like mist, the solid lands,
 Like clouds they shape themselves and
 go.

But in my spirit will I dwell,
 And dream my dream, and hold it true;
 For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,
 I cannot think the thing farewell.

CXXIV

That which we dare invoke to bless;
 Our dearest faith; our ghastliest
 doubt;
 He, They, One, All; within, without;
 The Power in darkness whom we guess,—

I found Him not in world or sun,
 Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye,
 Nor thro' the questions men may try,
 The petty cobwebs we have spun.

If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,
 I heard a voice, "believe no more,"
 And heard an ever-breaking shore
 That tumbled in the Godless deep,

A warmth within the breast would melt
 The freezing reason's colder part,
 And like a man in wrath the heart
 Stood up and answer'd, "I have felt."

No, like a child in doubt and fear:
 But that blind clamor made me wise;
 Then was I as a child that cries,
 But, crying, knows his father near;

And what I am beheld again
 What is, and no man understands;
 And out of darkness came the hands
 That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

CXXV

What ever I have said or sung,
 Some bitter notes my harp would give,
 Yea, tho' there often seem'd to live
 A contradiction on the tongue,

Yet hope had never lost her youth,
 She did but look through dimmer eyes,
 Or Love but play'd with gracious lies,
 Because he felt so fix'd in truth;

And if the song were full of care,
 He breathed the spirit of the song;
 And if the words were sweet and
 strong
 He set his royal signet there;

Abiding with me till I sail
 To seek thee on the mystic deeps,
 And this electric force, that keeps
 A thousand pulses dancing, fail.

W CXXVI

Love is and was my lord and king,
 And in his presence I attend
 To hear the tidings of my friend,
 Which every hour his couriers bring.

Love is and was my king and lord,
 And will be, tho' as yet I keep
 Within the court on earth, and sleep
 Encompass'd by his faithful guard,

And hear at times a sentinel
 Who moves about from place to place,
 And whispers to the worlds of space,
 In the deep night, that all is well.

W CXXVII

And all is well, tho' faith and form
 Be sunder'd in the night of fear ;
 Well roars the storm to those that hear
 A deeper voice across the storm,

Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
 And justice, even tho' thrice again
 The red fool-fury of the Seine
 Should pile her barricades with dead.

But ill for him that wears a crown,
 And him, the lazar, in his rags !
 They tremble, the sustaining crags ;
 The spires of ice are toppled down,

And molten up, and roar in flood ;
 The fortress crashes from on high,
 The brute earth lightens to the sky,
 And the great Æon sinks in blood,

And compass'd by the fires of hell ;
 While thou, dear spirit, happy star,
 O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
 And smilest, knowing all is well.

CXXIX

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,
 So far, so near in woe and weal,
 O loved the most, when most I feel
 There is a lower and a higher ;

Known and unknown, human, divine ;
 Sweet human hand and lips and eye ;
 Dear heavenly friend that canst not
 die,

Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine ;

Strange friend, past, present, and to be ;
 Loved deeper, darker understood ;
 Behold, I dream a dream of good,
 And mingle all the world with thee.

W CXXX

Thy voice is on the rolling air ;
 I hear thee where the waters run ;
 Thou standest in the rising sun,
 And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then ? I cannot guess ;
 But tho' I seem in star and flower
 To feel thee some diffusive power,
 I do not therefore love thee less.

My love involves the love before ;
 My love is vaster passion now ;
 Tho' mix'd with God and Nature thou
 I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;
 I have thee still, and I rejoice ;
 I prosper, circled with thy voice ;
 I shall not lose thee tho' I die.

W CXXXI

O living will that shalt endure
 When all that seems shall suffer shock,
 Rise in the spiritual rock,
 Flow thro' our deeds and make them
 pure,

That we may lift from out of dust
 A voice as unto him that hears,
 A cry above the conquer'd years
 To one that with us works, and trust,

With faith that comes of self-control,
 The truths that never can be proved
 Until we close with all we loved,
 And all we flow from, soul in soul.

1833-49. 1850.

TO THE QUEEN¹

REVERED, beloved—O you that hold
 A nobler office upon earth
 Than arms, or power of brain, or birth
 Could give the warrior kings of old,

Victoria,—since your Royal grace
 To one of less desert allows
 This laurel greener from the brows
 Of him that utter'd nothing base ;

¹ Prefixed to the first edition of Tennyson's
 Poems published after he became Poet Laureate

And should your greatness, and the care
That yokes with empire, yield you time
To make demand of modern rhyme
If aught of ancient worth be there ;

Then—while a sweeter music wakes,
And thro' wild March the throstle calls,
Where all about your palace-walls
The sun-lit almond-blossom shakes—

Take, Madam, this poor book of song ;
For tho' the faults were thick as dust
In vacant chambers, I could trust
Your kindness. May you rule us long,

And leave us rulers of your blood
As noble till the latest day !
May children of our children say,
“ She wrought her people lasting good ;

“ Her court was pure ; her life serene ;
God gave her peace ; her land reposed ;
A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen ;

“ And statesmen at her council met
Who knew the seasons when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet

“ By shaping some august decree
Which kept her throne unshaken still,
Broad-based upon her people's will,
And compass'd by the inviolate sea.”
1851.

THE EAGLE

FRAGMENT

He clasps the crag with crooked hands,
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.
1851.

COME NOT WHEN I AM DEAD

COME not, when I am dead,
To drop thy foolish tears upon my
grave,
To trample round my fallen head,
And vex the unhappy dust thou
wouldst not save.
There let the wind sweep and the plover
cry ;
But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest :
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of
time,

And I desire to rest.
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where
I lie ;
Go by, go by. 1851.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

I

BURY the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation ;
Let us bury the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a
mighty nation ;
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II

Where shall we lay the man whom we
deplore ?
Here, in streaming London's central
roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III

Lead out the pageant : sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long, long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it
grow,
And let the mournful martial music
blow :
The last great Englishman is low.

IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the
past,
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute !
Mourn for the man of long-enduring
blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, reso-
lute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,

Foremost captain of his time,
 Rich in saving common-sense,
 And, as the greatest only are,
 In his simplicity sublime.
 O good gray head which all men knew,
 O voice from which their omens all men
 drew,
 O iron nerve to true occasion true,
 O fallen at length that tower of strength
 Which stood four-square to all the winds
 that blew!
 Such was he whom we deplore.
 The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
 The great World-victor's victor will be
 seen no more.

v

All is over and done,
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 England, for thy son.
 Let the bell be toll'd.
 Render thanks to the Giver,
 And render him to the mould.
 Under the cross of gold
 That shines over city and river,
 There he shall rest for ever
 Among the wise and the bold.
 Let the bell be toll'd,
 And a reverent people behold
 The towering car, the sable steeds.
 Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
 Dark in its funeral fold.
 Let the bell be toll'd,
 And a deeper knell in the heart be
 knoll'd;
 And the sound of the sorrowing anthem
 roll'd
 Thro' the dome of the golden cross;
 And the volleying cannon thunder his
 loss;
 He knew their voices of old.
 For many a time in many a clime
 His captain's-ear has heard them boom
 Bellowing victory, bellowing doom.
 When he with those deep voices
 wrought,
 Guarding realms and kings from shame,
 With those deep voices our dead cap-
 tain taught
 The tyrant, and asserts his claim
 In that dread sound to the great name
 Which he has worn so pure of blame,
 In praise and in dispraise the same,
 A man of well-attemper'd frame.
 O civic muse, to such a name,
 To such a name for ages long,
 To such a name,
 Preserve a broad approach of fame,
 And ever-echoing avenues of song!

vi

"Who is he that cometh, like an hon-
 or'd guest,
 With banner and with music, with sol-
 dier and with priest,
 With a nation weeping, and breaking
 on my rest?"—
 Mighty Seaman, this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea.
 Thine island loves thee well, thou
 famous man,
 The greatest sailor since our world be-
 gan.
 Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
 To thee the greatest soldier comes;
 For this is he
 Was great by land as thou by sea.
 His foes were thine; he kept us free;
 O, give him welcome, this is he
 Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
 And worthy to be laid by thee;
 For this is England's greatest son,
 He that gain'd a hundred fights,
 Nor ever lost an English gun;
 This is he that far away
 Against the myriads of Assaye
 Clash'd with his fiery few and won;
 And underneath another sun,
 Warring on a later day,
 Round affrighted Lisbon drew
 The treble works, the vast designs
 Of his labor'd rampart-lines,
 Where he greatly stood at bay,
 Whence he issued forth anew,
 And ever great and greater grew,
 Beating from the wasted vines
 Back to France her banded swarms,
 Back to France with countless blows,
 Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
 Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
 Follow'd up in valley and glen
 With blare of bugle, clamor of men,
 Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
 And England pouring on her foes,
 Such a war had such a close.
 Again their ravening eagle rose
 In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing
 wings,
 And barking for the thrones of kings;
 Till one that sought but Duty's iron
 crown
 On that loud Sabbath shook the spoiler
 down;
 A day of onsets of despair!
 Dash'd on every rocky square,
 Their surging charges foam'd them-
 selves away;
 Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;

Thro' the long-tormented air
 Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
 And down we swept and charged and
 overthrew.

So great a soldier taught us there
 What long-enduring hearts could do
 In that world-earthquake, Waterloo!
 Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
 And pure as he from taint of craven
 guile,

O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
 O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
 If aught of things that here befall
 Touch a spirit among things divine,
 If love of country move thee there at all.
 Be glad, because his bones are laid by
 thine!

And thro' the centuries let a people's
 voice

In full acclaim,
 A people's voice,
 The proof and echo of all human fame,
 A people's voice, when they rejoice
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 Attest their great commander's claim
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
 Eternal honor to his name.

VII

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
 Tho' all men else their nobler dreams
 forget,

Confused by brainless mobs and lawless
 Powers,

Thank Him who isled us here, and
 roughly set

His Briton in blown seas and storming
 showers,

We have a voice with which to pay the
 debt

Of boundless love and reverence and
 regret

To those great men who fought, and
 kept it ours.

And keep it ours, O God, from brute
 control!

O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye,
 the soul

Of Europe, keep our noble England
 whole,

And save the one true seed of freedom
 sown

Betwixt a people and their ancient
 throne,

That sober freedom out of which there
 springs

Our loyal passion for our temperate
 kings!

For, saving that, ye help to save man-

Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
 And drill the raw world for the march
 of mind,

Till crowds at length be sane and crowns
 be just.

But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
 Remember him who led your hosts;

He bade you guard the sacred coasts.
 Your cannons moulder on the seaward
 wall;

His voice is silent in your council-hall
 For ever; and whatever tempests lour
 For ever silent; even if they broke
 In thunder, silent; yet remember all
 He spoke among you, and the Man who
 spoke;

Who never sold the truth to serve the
 hour,

Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;
 Who let the turbid streams of rumor
 flow

Thro' either babbling world of high and
 low;

Whose life was work, whose language
 rife

With rugged maxims hewn from life;
 Who never spoke against a foe;

Whose eighty winters freeze with one
 rebuke

All great self-seekers trampling on the
 right.

Truth-teller was our England's Alfred
 named;

Truth-lover was our English Duke!
 Whatever record leap to light
 He never shall be shamed.

VIII

Lo! the leader in these glorious wars
 Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
 Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
 He, on whom from both her open hands
 Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars,
 And affluent Fortune emptied all her
 horn.

Yea, let all good things await
 Him who cares not to be great
 But as he saves or serves the state.

Not once or twice in our rough island-
 story

The path of duty was the way to glory.
 He that walks it, only thirsting
 For the right, and learns to deaden
 Love of self, before his journey closes,
 He shall find the stubborn thistle burst-
 ing

Into glossy purples, which out-redden
 All voluptuous garden-roses.

Not once or twice in our fair island-story

The path of duty was the way to glory.
 He, that ever following her commands,
 On with toil of heart and knees and
 hands,
 Thro' the long gorge to the far light has
 won
 His path upward, and prevail'd,
 Shall find the toppling crags of Duty
 scaled
 Are close upon the shining table-lands
 To which our God Himself is moon and
 sun.
 Such was he : his work is done.
 But while the races of mankind endure
 Let his great example stand
 Colossal, seen of every land,
 And keep the soldier firm, the statesman
 pure ;
 Till in all lands and thro' all human story
 The path of duty be the way to glory.
 And let the land whose hearths he saved
 from shame
 For many and many an age proclaim
 At civic revel and pomp and game,
 And when the long-illuminated cities
 flame,
 Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
 With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
 Eternal honor to his name.

IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung
 By some yet unmoulded tongue
 Far on in summers that we shall not see.
 Peace, it is a day of pain
 For one about whose patriarchal knee
 Late the little children clung.
 O peace, it is a day of pain
 For one upon whose hand and heart and
 brain
 Once the weight and fate of Europe
 hung.
 Ours the pain, be his the gain !
 More than is of man's degree
 Must be with us, watching here
 At this, our great solemnity.
 Whom we see not we revere ;
 We revere, and we refrain
 From talk of battles loud and vain,
 And brawling memories all too free
 For such a wise humility
 As befits a solemn fane :
 We revere, and while we hear
 The tides of Music's golden sea
 Setting toward eternity,
 Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
 Until we doubt not that for one so true
 There must be other nobler work to do
 Than when he fought at Waterloo,

And Victor he must ever be.
 For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
 And break the shore, and evermore
 Make and break, and work their will,
 Tho' world on world in myriad myriads
 roll
 Round us, each with different powers,
 And other forms of life than ours,
 What know we greater than the soul ?
 On God and Godlike men we build our
 trust.
 Hush, the Dead March wails in the
 people's ears ;
 The dark crowd moves, and there are
 sobs and tears ;
 The black earth yawns ; the mortal dis-
 appears ;
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;
 He is gone who seem'd so great.--
 Gone, but nothing can bereave him
 Of the force he made his own
 Being here, and we believe him
 Something far advanced in State,
 And that he wears a truer crown
 Than any wreath that man can weave
 him.
 Speak no more of his renown,
 Lay your earthly fancies down,
 And in the vast cathedral leave him,
 God accept him, Christ receive him !
 1852.

W HANDS ALL ROUND

FIRST pledge our Queen this solemn
 night,
 Then drink to England, every guest ;
 That man's the best Cosmopolite
 Who loves his native country best.
 May freedom's oak for ever live
 With stronger life from day to day ;
 That man's the true Conservative
 Who lops the moulder'd branch away.
 Hands all round !
 God the traitor's hope confound !
 To this great cause of Freedom drink, my
 friends,
 And the great name of England, round
 and round.
 To all the loyal hearts who long
 To keep our English Empire whole !
 To all our noble sons, the strong
 New England of the Southern Pole !
 To England under Indian skies,
 To those dark millions of her realm !
 To Canada whom we love and prize,
 Whatever statesman hold the helm.
 Hands all round !

God the traitor's hope confound !
To this great name of England drink, my
friends, [round.
And all her glorious empire, round and

To all our statesmen so they be
True leaders of the land's desire !
To both our Houses, may they see
Beyond the borough and the shire !
We sail'd wherever ship could sail,
We founded many a mighty state ;
Pray God our greatness may not fail
Thro' craven fears of being great !
Hands all round !
God the traitor's hope confound !
To this great cause of Freedom drink, my
friends,
And the great name of England, round
and round. 1852.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE¹

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward the Light Brigade !
Charge for the guns !" he said.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade !"
Was there a man dismay'd ?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd.
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die,
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell
Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air

¹ "On Dec. 2d he wrote the *Charge of the Light Brigade* in a few minutes, after reading the description in the *Times* in which occurred the phrase 'Some one had blundered,' and this was the origin of the metre of his poem." (*Life* 381.)

Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd.
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke ;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade ?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wonder'd.
Honor the charge they made !
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred !

December 9, 1854.

THE BROOK

I COME from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery water-break
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars,
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever. 1855.

LYRICS FROM MAUD¹

PART I

V

A VOICE by the cedar tree
In the meadow under the Hall!
She is singing an air that is known to
me,

A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet's call!
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife
To the death, for their native land.

¹ See the Life of Tennyson, I, 393-406.

Maud with her exquisite face,
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny
sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English
green,
Maud in the light of her youth and her
grace,
Singing of Death, and of Honor that
cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sor-
did and mean,
And myself so languid and base.

Silence, beautiful voice!
Be still, for you only trouble the mind
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.
Still! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a
choice
But to move to the meadow and fall be-
fore

Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

XI

O, let the solid ground
Not fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found
What some have found so sweet!
Then let come what come may,
What matter if I go mad,
I shall have had my day.

Let the sweet heavens endure,
Not close and darken above me
Before I am quite quite sure
That there is one to love me!
Then let come what come may
To a life that has been so sad,
I shall have had my day.

XII

Birds in the high Hall-garden
When twilight was falling,
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
They were crying and calling.

Where was Maud? in our wood;
And I—who else?—was with her,
Gathering woodland lilies,
Myriads blow together.

Birds in our wood sang
Ringing thro' the valleys,
Maud is here, here, here
In among the lilies.

I kiss'd her slender hand,
 She took the kiss sedately;
 Maud is not seventeen,
 But she is tall and stately.

I to cry out on pride
 Who have won her favor!
 O, Maud were sure of heaven
 If lowliness could save her!

I know the way she went
 Home with her maiden posy,
 For her feet have touch'd the meadows
 And left the daisies rosy.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
 Were crying and calling to her,
 Where is Maud, Maud, Maud?
 One is come to woo her.

Look, a horse at the door,
 And little King Charley snarling!
 Go back, my lord, across the moor,
 You are not her darling.

XVII

Go not, happy day,
 From the shining fields,
 Go not, happy day,
 Till the maiden yields.
 Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth.
 When the happy Yes
 Falters from her lips,
 Pass and blush the news
 Over glowing ships;
 Over blowing seas,
 Over seas at rest,
 Pass the happy news,
 Blush it thro' the West;
 Till the red man dance
 By his red cedar-tree,
 And the red man's babe
 Leap, beyond the sea.
 Blush from West to East,
 Blush from East to West,
 Till the West is East,
 Blush it thro' the West.
 Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth.

XVIII

I have led her home, my love, my only
 friend.
 There is none like her, none.

And never yet so warmly ran my blood
 And sweetly, on and on
 Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,
 Full to the banks, close on the promised
 good.

None like her, none.
 Just now the dry-tongued laurels' patter-
 ing talk
 Seem'd her light foot along the garden
 walk,
 And shook my heart to think she comes
 once more.
 But even then I heard her close the door;
 The gates of heaven are closed, and she
 is gone.

There is none like her, none,
 Nor will be when our summers have de-
 ceased.
 O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
 In the long breeze that streams to thy
 delicious East,
 Sighing for Lebanon,
 Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here in-
 creased,
 Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
 And looking to the South and fed
 With honey'd rain and delicate air,
 And haunted by the starry head
 Of her whose gentle will has changed my
 fate,
 And made my life a perfumed altar-
 flame:
 And over whom thy darkness must have
 spread
 With such delight as theirs of old, thy
 great
 Forefathers of the thornless garden,
 there
 Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from
 whom she came?

Here will I lie, while these long branches
 sway, [day
 And you fair stars that crown a happy
 Go in and out as if at merry play,
 Who am no more so all forlorn
 As when it seem'd far better to be born
 To labor and the mattock-harden'd hand
 Than nursed at ease and brought to
 understand
 A sad astrology, the boundless plan
 That makes you tyrants in your iron
 skies,
 Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
 Cold fires, yet with power to burn and
 brand
 His nothingness into man.

But now shine on, and what care I
Who in this stormy gulf have found a
pearl
The countercharm of space and hollow
sky,
And do accept my madness, and would
die
To save from some slight shame one
simple girl?—

Would die, for sullen-seeming Death
may give
More life to Love than is or ever was
In our low world, where yet 't is sweet
to live.
Let no one ask me how it came to pass ;
It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

Not die, but live a life of truest breath,
And teach true life to fight with mortal
wrongs.
O, why should Love, like men in drink-
ing songs,
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of
death ?
Make answer, Maud my bliss,
Maud made my Maud by that long loving
kiss,
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer
this ?
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven
here
With dear Love's tie, makes Love him-
self more dear,"

Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder
bay ?
And hark the clock within, the silver
knell
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal
white,
And died to live, long as my pulses
play ;
But now by this my love has closed her
sight,
And given false death her hand, and
stolen away
To dreamful wastes where footless fan-
cies dwell
Among the fragments of the golden
day.
May nothing there her maiden grace
affright !
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy
spell.
My bride to be, my evermore delight,

My own heart's heart, my ownest own,
farewell ;
It is but for a little space I go.
And ye meanwhile far over moor and
fell
Beat to the noiseless music of the night !
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the
glow
Of your soft splendors that you look so
bright ?
I have climb'd nearer out of lonely hell.
Beat, happy stars, timing with things
below,
Beat with my heart more blest than
heart can tell,
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent
woe [so ;
That seems to draw—but it shall not be
Let all be well, be well.

XXI

Rivulet crossing my ground,
And bringing me down from the Hall
This garden-rose that I found,
Forgetful of Maud and me,
And lost in trouble and moving round
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,
And trying to pass to the sea ;
O rivulet, born at the Hall,
My Maud has sent it by thee—
If I read her sweet will right—
On a blushing mission to me,
Saying in odor and color, " Ah be
Among the roses to-night."

XXII

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone ;
And the woodbine spices are wafted
abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.
For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she
loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves
To faint in his light, and to die.
All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon ;
All night has the casement jessamina
stirr'd
To the dancers dancing in tune ;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, "There is but one,
 With whom she has heart to be gay.
 When will the dancers leave her alone?
 She is weary of dance and play."
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,
 And half to the rising day;
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone
 The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
 In babble and revel and wine.
 O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
 For one that will never be thine?
 But mine, but mine," so I sware to the
 rose,
 "For ever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my
 blood,
 As the music clash'd in the Hall;
 And long by the garden lake I stood,
 For I heard your rivulet fall
 From the lake to the meadow and on to
 the wood,
 Our wood, that is dearer than all;

From the meadow your walks have left
 so sweet
 That whenever a March-wind sighs
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet
 In violets blue as your eyes,
 To the woody hollows in which we
 meet
 And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
 One long milk-bloom on the tree;
 The white lake-blossom fell into the
 lake
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
 But the rose was awake all night for
 your sake,
 Knowing your promise to me;
 The lilies and roses were all awake,
 They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of
 girls,
 Come hither, the dances are done,
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
 Queen lily and rose in one; [curls,
 Shine out, little head, sunning over with
 To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
 From the passion-flower at the gate,
 She is coming, my dove, my dear;
 She is coming, my life, my fate.
 The red rose cries, "She is near, she is
 near;"

And the white rose weeps, "She is
 late;"
 The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"
 And the lily whispers, "I wait."

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
 Were it ever so airy a tread,
 My heart would hear her and beat,
 Were it earth in an earthy bed;
 My dust would hear her and beat,
 Had I lain for a century dead,
 Would start and tremble under her feet
 And blossom in purple and red.

PART II

II

SEE what a lovely shell,
 Small and pure as a pearl,
 Lying close to my foot,
 Frail, but a work divine,
 Made so fairly well
 With delicate spire and whorl,
 How exquisitely minute,
 A miracle of design!

What is it? a learned man
 Could give it a clumsy name.
 Let him name it who can,
 The beauty would be the same.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
 Void of the little living will
 That made it stir on the shore.
 Did he stand at the diamond door
 Of his house in a rainbow frill?
 Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
 A golden foot or a fairy horn
 Thro' his dim water-world?

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap
 Of my finger-nail on the sand,
 Small, but a work divine,
 Frail, but of force to withstand,
 Year upon year, the shock
 Of cataract seas that snap
 The three-decker's oaken spine
 Athwart the ledges of rock,
 Here on the Breton strand!

Breton, not Briton; here
 Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast
 Of ancient fable and fear—
 Plagued with a flitting to and fro,
 A disease, a hard mechanic ghost
 That never came from on high
 Nor ever arose from below,
 But only moves with the moving eye,
 Flying along the land and the main--

Why should it look like Maud?
Am I to be overawed
By what I cannot but know
Is a juggle born of the brain?

Back from the Breton coast,
Sick of a nameless fear,
Back to the dark sea-line
Looking, thinking of all I have lost;
An old song vexes my ear,
But that of Lamech is mine.

For years, a measureless ill,
For years, for ever, to part—
But she, she would love me still;
And as long, O God, as she
Have a grain of love for me,
So long, no doubt, no doubt,
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,
However weary, a spark of will
Not to be trampled out.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught
With a passion so intense
One would think that it well
Might drown all life in the eye,—
That it should, by being so overwrought,
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense
For a shell, or a flower, little things
Which else would have been past by!
And now I remember, I,
When he lay dying there,
I noticed one of his many rings—
For he had many, poor worm — and
thought,
It is his mother's hair.

Who knows if he be dead?
Whether I need have fled?
Am I guilty of blood?
However this may be,
Comfort her, comfort her, all things
good,

While I am over the sea!
Let me and my passionate love go by,
But speak to her all things holy and
high,

Whatever happen to me!
Me and my harmful love go by;
But come to her waking, find her asleep,
Powers of the height, Powers of the
deep,
And comfort her tho' I die!

IV

O that 't were possible
After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again!

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent woody places
By the home that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixed with kisses sweeter, sweeter
Than anything on earth.

A shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee.
Ah, Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell
us
What and where they be!

It leads me forth at evening,
It lightly winds and steals
In a cold white robe before me,
When all my spirit reels
At the shouts, the leagues of lights,
And the roaring of the wheels.

Half the night I waste in sighs,
Half in dreams I sorrow after
The delight of early skies;
In a wakeful doze I sorrow
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,
For the meeting of the morrow,
The delight of happy laughter,
The delight of low replies.

'T is a morning pure and sweet,
And a dewy splendor falls
On the little flower that clings
To the turrets and the walls;
'T is a morning pure and sweet,
And the light and shadow fleet.

She is walking in the meadow,
And the woodland echo rings;
In a moment we shall meet.
She is singing in the meadow,
And the rivulet at her feet
Ripples on in light and shadow
To the ballad that she sings.

Do I hear her sing as of old,
My bird with the shining head,
My own dove with the tender eye?
But there rings on a sudden a passionate
cry,

There is some one dying or dead,
And a sullen thunder is roll'd;
For a tumult shakes the city,
And I wake, my dream is fled.
In the shuddering dawn, behold,
Without knowledge, without pity,
By the curtains of my bed
That abiding phantom cold!

Get thee hence, nor come again,
Mix not memory with doubt,
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,
Pass and cease to move about !
'T is the blot upon the brain
That *will* show itself without.

Then I rise, the eave-drops fall,
And the yellow vapors choke
The great city sounding wide ;
The day comes, a dull red ball
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke
On the misty river-tide.

Thro' the hubbub of the market
I steal, a wasted frame ;
It crosses here, it crosses there,
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,
The shadow still the same ;
And on my heavy eyelids
My anguish hangs like shame.

Alas for her that met me,
That heard me softly call,
Came glimmering thro' the laurels
At the quiet evenfall,
In the garden by the turrets
Of the old manorial hall !

Would the happy spirit descend
From the realms of light and song,
In the chamber or the street,
As she looks among the blest,
Should I fear to greet my friend
Or to say " Forgive the wrong,"
Or to ask her, " Take me, sweet,
To the regions of thy rest " ?

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be ;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me.
Always I long to creep
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee. 1855.

WILL

O, WELL for him whose will is strong !
He suffers, but he will not suffer long ;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong.
For him nor moves the loud world's
random mock,
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves con-
found,
Who seems a promontory of rock,

That, compass'd round with turbulent
sound,
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffed, citadel-crown'd.

But ill for him who, bettering not with
time,
Corrupts the strength of heaven-de-
scended Will,
And ever weaker grows thro' acted
crime,
Or seeming-genial venial fault,
Recurring and suggesting still !
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
Toiling in immeasurable sand,
And o'er a weary sultry land,
Far beneath a blazing vault,
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous
hill,
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.
1855.

ENID'S SONG

TURN, Fortune, turn thy wheel, and
lower the proud ;
Turn thy wild wheel thro' sunshine,
storm, and cloud ;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor
hate.

Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with
smile or frown ;
With that wild wheel we go not up or
down ;
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are
great.

Smile and we smile, the lords of many
lands ;
Frown and we smile, the lords of our
own hands ;
For man is man and master of his fate.

Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring
crowd ;
Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the
cloud ;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor
hate.

From the *Marriage of Geraint*, 1859.

VIVIEN'S SONG

In love, if love be love, if love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal
powers :
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all

It is the little rift within the lute,
That by and by will make the music
mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all.

The little rift within the lover's lute,
Or little pitted speck in garner'd fruit,
That rotting inward slowly moulders all.

It is not worth the keeping; let it go:
But shall it? answer, darling, answer, no.
And trust me not at all or all in all.
From *Merlin and Vivien*, 1859.

ELAINE'S SONG

SWEET is true love tho' given in vain, in
vain;
And sweet is death who puts an end to
pain.
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

Love, art thou sweet? then bitter death
must be.
Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to
me.
O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

Sweet love, that seems not made to fade
away;
Sweet death, that seems to make us love-
less clay;
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

I fain would follow love, if that could
be;
I needs must follow death, who calls for
me;
Call and I follow, I follow! let me die.
From *Lancelot and Elaine*, 1859.

GUINEVERE

QUEEN GUINEVERE had fled the court,
and sat
There in the holy house at Almesbury
Weeping, none with her save a little
maid,
A novice. One low light betwixt them
burn'd
Blurr'd by the creeping mist, for all
abroad,
Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,
The white mist, like a face-cloth to the
face,
Clung to the dead earth, and the land
was still.

For hither had she fled, her cause of
flight

Sir Modred; he that like a subtle beast
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the
throne,
Ready to spring, waiting a chance. For
this
He chill'd the popular praises of the
King
With silent smiles of slow disparage-
ment;
And tamper'd with the Lords of the
White Horse.
Heathen, the brood by Hengist left; and
sought
To make disruption in the Table Round
Of Arthur, and to splinter it into feuds
Serving his traitorous end; and all his
aims
Were sharpen'd by strong hate for Lance-
lot.

For thus it chanced one morn when all
the court,
Green-suited, but with plumes that
mock'd the May,
Had been—their wont—a-maying and
return'd,
That Modred still in green, all ear and
eye,
Climb'd to the high top of the garden-
wall
To spy some secret scandal if he might,
And saw the Queen who sat betwixt her,
best
Enid and lissome Vivien, of her court
The wildest and the worst; and more
than this
He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing by
Spied where he couch'd, and as the gar-
dener's hand
Picks from the colewort a green cater-
pillar,
So from the high wall and the flowering
grove
Of grasses Lancelot pluck'd him by the
heel,
And cast him as a worm upon the way;
But when he knew the prince tho'
marr'd with dust,
He, reverencing king's blood in a bad
man,
Made such excuses as he might, and
these
Full knightly without scorn. For in
those days
No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in
scorn;
But, if a man were halt, or hunch'd, in
By those whom God had made full-
limb'd and tall,

Scorn was allow'd as part of his defect,
 And he was answer'd softly by the King
 And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot help
 To raise the prince, who rising twice or
 thrice
 Full sharply smote his knees, and smiled,
 and went;
 But, ever after, the small violence done
 Rankled in him and ruffled all his heart,
 As the sharp wind that ruffles all day
 long
 A little bitter pool about a stone
 On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told
 This matter to the Queen, at first she
 laugh'd
 Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty fall,
 Then shudder'd, as the village wife who
 cries,
 "I shudder, some one steps across my
 grave;"
 Then laugh'd again, but faintlier, for in-
 deed
 She half-foresaw that he, the subtle beast,
 Would track her guilt until he found,
 and hers
 Would be for evermore a name of scorn.
 Henceforward rarely could she front in
 hall,
 Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy face,
 Heart-hiding smile, and gray persistent
 eye.
 Henceforward too, the Powers that tend
 the soul,
 To help it from the death that cannot
 die,
 And save it even in extremes, began
 To vex and plague her. Many a time for
 hours,
 Beside the placid breathings of the King,
 In the dead night, grim faces came and
 went
 Before her, or a vague spiritual fear—
 Like to some doubtful noise of creaking
 doors,
 Heard by the watcher in a haunted
 house,
 That keeps the rust of murder on the
 walls—
 Held her awake; or if she slept she
 dream'd [stand
 An awful dream, for then she seem'd to
 On some vast plain before a setting sun,
 And from the sun there swiftly made at
 her
 A ghastly something, and its shadow flew
 Before it till it touch'd her, and she
 turn'd—

When lo! her own, that broadening
 from her feet,
 And blackening, swallow'd all the land,
 and in it
 Far cities burnt, and with a cry she
 woke.
 And all this trouble did not pass but
 grew,
 Till even the clear face of the guileless
 King,
 And trustful courtesies of household life,
 Became her bane; and at the last she
 said:
 "O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine
 own land,
 For if thou tarry we shall meet again,
 And if we meet again some evil chance
 Will make the smouldering scandal
 break and blaze
 Before the people and our lord the King."
 And Lancelot ever promised, but re-
 main'd
 And still they met and met. Again she
 said,
 "O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee
 hence."
 And then they were agreed upon a
 night—
 When the good King should not be there
 —to meet
 And part for ever. Vivien, lurking,
 heard.
 She told Sir Modred. Passion-pale they
 met
 And greeted. Hands in hands, and eye
 to eye,
 Low on the border of her couch they sat
 Stammering and staring. It was their
 last hour,
 A madness of farewells. And Modred
 brought
 His creatures to the basement of the
 tower
 For testimony; and crying with full
 voice,
 "Traitor, come out, ye are trapped at
 last," aroused
 Lancelot, who rushing outward lionlike
 Leapt on him, and hurl'd him headlong,
 and he fell
 Stunn'd and his creatures took and bare
 him off,
 And all was still. Then she, "The end
 is come,
 And I am shamed for ever;" and he
 said:
 "Mine be the shame, mine was the sin;
 but rise,
 And fly to my strong castle over-seas.

There will I hide thee till my life shall
 end,
 There hold thee with my life against the
 world."
 She answer'd: "Lancelot, wilt thou hold
 me so?
 Nay, friend, for we have taken our fare-
 wells.
 Would God that thou couldst hide me
 from myself!
 Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and
 thou
 Unwedded; yet rise now, and let us fly,
 For I will draw me into sanctuary,
 And bide my doom." So Lancelot got
 her horse,
 Set her thereon, and mounted on his
 own,
 And then they rode to the divided way,
 There kiss'd, and parted weeping; for
 he passed,
 Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen,
 Back to his land; but she to Almesbury
 Fled all night long by glimmering waste
 and weald,
 And heard the spirits of the waste and
 weald
 Moan as she fled, or thought she heard
 them moan.
 And in herself she moan'd, "Too late,
 too late!"
 Till in the cold wind that foreruns the
 morn,
 A blot in heaven, the raven, flying high,
 Croak'd, and she thought, "He spies a
 field of death;
 For now the heathen of the Northern
 Sea,
 Lured by the crimes and frailties of the
 court,
 Begin to slay the folk and spoil the land."

And when she came to Almesbury she
 spake
 There to the nuns, and said, "Mine ene-
 mies
 Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,
 Receive and yield me sanctuary, nor ask
 Her name to whom ye yield it till her
 time
 To tell you;" and her beauty, grace,
 and power
 Wrought as a charm upon them, and
 they spared
 To ask it.

So the stately Queen abode
 For many a week, unknown, among the
 nuns,

Nor with them mix'd, nor told her name,
 nor sought,
 Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for
 shrift,
 But communed only with the little
 maid,
 Who pleased her with a babbling heed-
 lessness
 Which often lured her from herself;
 but now,
 This night, a rumor wildly blown about
 Came that Sir Modred had usurp'd the
 realm
 And leagued him with the heathen,
 while the King
 Was waging war on Lancelot. Then
 she thought,
 "With what a hate the people and the
 King
 Must hate me," and bow'd down upon
 her hands
 Silent, until the little maid, who brook'd
 No silence, brake it, uttering "Late! so
 late!
 What, hour, I wonder now?" and when
 she drew
 No answer, by and by began to hum
 An air the nuns had taught her: "Late,
 so late!"
 Which when she heard, the Queen look'd
 up and said,
 "O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,
 Sing, and unbind my heart that I may
 weep."
 Whereat full willingly sang the little
 maid.

"Late, late, so late! and dark the night and
 chill!
 Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.
 Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"No light had we; for that we do repent,
 And learning this, the bridegroom will relent.
 Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"No light! so late! and dark and chill the
 night!
 O, let us in, that we may find the light!
 Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

"Have we not heard the bridegroom is so
 sweet!
 O, let us in, tho' late, to kiss his feet!
 No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now."

So sang the novice, while full pas-
 sionately,
 Her head upon her hands, remembering
 Her thought when first she came, wept
 the sad Queen.
 Then said the little novice, prattling to
 her:

"O pray you, noble lady, weep no more;
 But let my words—the words of one so small,
 Who knowing nothing knows but to obey,
 And if I do not there is penance given—
 Comfort your sorrows, for they do not flow
 From evil done; right sure am I of that,
 Who sees your tender grace and state-
 liness.
 But weigh your sorrows with our lord
 the King's,
 And weighing find them less; for gone
 is he
 To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot
 there,
 Round that strong castle where he holds
 the Queen;
 And Modred whom he left in charge of
 all,
 The traitor—Ah, sweet lady, the King's
 grief
 For his own self, and his own Queen
 and realm,
 Must needs be thrice as great as any of
 ours!
 For me, I thank the saints, I am not
 great;
 For if there ever come a grief to me
 I cry my cry in silence, and have done;
 None knows it, and my tears have
 brought me good.
 But even were the griefs of little ones
 As great as those of great ones, yet this
 grief
 Is added to the griefs the great must
 bear,
 That, howsoever much they may desire
 Silence, they cannot weep behind a
 cloud;
 As even here they talk at Almesbury
 About the good King and his wicked
 Queen,
 And were I such a King with such a
 Queen,
 Well might I wish to veil her wicked-
 ness,
 But were I such a King it could not be."

Then to her own sad heart mutter'd
 the Queen,
 "Will the child kill me with her inno-
 cent talk?"
 But openly she answer'd, "Must not I,
 If this false traitor have displaced his
 lord, [realm?"
 Grieve with the common grief of all the

"Yea," said the maid, "that all is
 woman's grief,
 That *she* is woman, whose disloyal life
 Hath wrought confusion in the Table
 Round
 Which good King Arthur founded, years
 ago,
 With signs and miracles and wonders,
 there
 At Camelot, ere the coming of the
 Queen."

Then thought the Queen within her-
 self again,
 "Will the child kill me with her foolish
 prate?"
 But openly she spake and said to her,
 "O little maid, shut in by nunnery
 walls,
 What canst thou know of Kings and
 Tables Round,
 Or what of signs and wonders, but the
 signs
 And simple miracles of thy nunnery?"

To whom the little novice garrulously:
 "Yea, but I know; the land was full of
 signs
 And wonders ere the coming of the
 Queen.
 So said my father, and himself was
 knight
 Of the great Table—at the founding of
 it,
 And rode thereto from Lyonesse; and
 he said
 That as he rode, an hour or maybe twain
 After the sunset, down the coast, he
 heard
 Strange music, and he paused, and turn-
 ing—there,
 All down the lovely coast of Lyonesse,
 Each with a beacon-star upon his head,
 And with a wild sea-light about his feet,
 He saw them—headland after headland
 flame
 Far on into the rich heart of the west.
 And in the light the white mermaiden
 swam,
 And strong man-breasted things stood
 from the sea,
 And sent a deep sea-voice thro' all the
 land,
 To which the little elves of chasm and
 cleft
 Made answer, sounding like a distant
 horn.
 So said my father—yea, and further-
 more,

Next morning, while he past the dim-lit
 woods
 Himself beheld three spirits mad with
 joy
 Come dashing down on a tall wayside
 flower,
 That shook beneath them as the thistle
 shakes
 When three gray linnets wrangle for the
 seed.
 And still at evenings on before his
 horse
 The flickering fairy-circle wheel'd and
 broke
 Flying, and link'd again, and wheel'd
 and broke
 Flying, for all the land was full of life.
 And when at last he came to Camelot,
 A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand
 Swung round the lighted lantern of the
 hall;
 And in the hall itself was such a feast
 As never man had dream'd; for every
 knight
 Had whatsoever meat he long'd for
 served
 By hands unseen; and even as he said
 Down in the cellars merry bloated things
 Shoulder'd the spigot, straddling on the
 butts
 While the wine ran; so glad were spirits
 and men
 Before the coming of the sinful Queen."

Then spake the Queen and somewhat
 bitterly,
 "Were they so glad? ill prophets were
 they all,
 Spirits and men. Could none of them
 foresee,
 Not even thy wise father with his signs
 And wonders, what has fallen upon the
 realm?"

To whom the novice garrulously
 again:
 "Yea, one, a bard, of whom my father
 said,
 Full many a noble war-song had he sung,
 Even in the presence of an enemy's
 fleet,
 Between the steep cliff and the coming
 wave;
 And many a mystic lay of life and
 death
 Had chanted on the smoky mountain-
 tops,
 When round him bent the spirits of the
 hills

With all their dewy hair blown back
 like flame.
 So said my father—and that night the
 bard
 Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang
 the King
 As wellnigh more than man, and rail'd
 at those
 Who call'd him the false son of Gorlois.
 For there was no man knew from
 whence he came;
 But after tempest, when the long wave
 broke
 All down the thundering shores of Bude
 and Bos,
 There came a day as still as heaven and
 then
 They found a naked child upon the
 sands
 Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea,
 And that was Arthur, and they foster'd
 him
 Till he by miracle was approven King;
 And that his grave should be a mystery
 From all men, like his birth; and could
 he find
 A woman in her womanhood as great
 As he was in his manhood, then, he
 sang,
 The twain together well might change
 the world.
 But even in the middle of his song
 He falter'd, and his hand fell from the
 harp,
 And pale he turn'd and reel'd, and would
 have fallen,
 But that they stay'd him up; nor would
 he tell
 His vision; but what doubt that he fore-
 saw
 This evil work of Lancelot and the
 Queen?"

Then thought the Queen, "Lo! they
 have set her on,
 Our simple-seeming abbess and her nuns,
 To play upon me," and bow'd her head
 nor spake.
 Whereat the novice crying, with clasp'd
 hands,
 Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,
 Said the good nuns would check her
 gadding tongue
 Full often, "and, sweet lady, if I seem
 To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,
 Unmannerly, with prattling and the
 tales
 Which my good father told me, check
 me too

Nor let me shame my father's memory,
 one
 Of noblest manners, tho' himself would
 say
 Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he
 die,
 Kill'd in a tilt, come next, five summers
 back,
 And left me; but of others who remain,
 And of the two first-famed for cour-
 tesy—
 And pray you check me if I ask amiss—
 But pray you, which had noblest, while
 you moved
 Among them, Lancelot or our lord the
 King?"

Then the pale Queen look'd up and
 answer'd her:
 "Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,
 Was gracious to all ladies, and the same
 In open battle or the tilting-field
 Forbore his own advantage, and the
 King
 In open battle or the tilting-field
 Forbore his own advantage, and these
 two
 Were the most nobly manner'd men of
 all;
 For manners are not idle, but the fruit
 Of loyal nature and of noble mind."

"Yea," said the maid, "be manners
 such fair fruit?
 Then Lancelot's needs must be a thou-
 sand-fold
 Less noble, being, as all rumor runs,
 The most disloyal friend in all the
 world."

To which a mournful answer made
 the Queen:
 "O, closed about by narrowing nunnery-
 walls,
 What knowest thou of the world and all
 its lights
 And shadows, all the wealth and all the
 woe?
 If ever Lancelot, that most noble knight,
 Were for one hour less noble than him-
 self,
 Pray for him that he scape the doom of
 fire,
 And weep for her who drew him to his
 doom."

"Yea," said the little novice, "I pray
 for both;
 But I should all as soon believe that his,

Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the
 King's,
 As I could think, sweet lady, yours
 would be
 Such as they are, were you the sinful
 Queen."

So she, like many another babbler,
 hurt
 Whom she would soothe, and harm'd
 where she would heal;
 For here a sudden flush of wrathful heat
 Fired all the pale face of the Queen, who
 cried:
 "Such as thou art be never maiden more
 For ever! thou their tool, set on to
 plague
 And play upon and harry me, petty spy
 And traitress!" When that storm of
 anger brake
 From Guinevere, aghast the maiden rose,
 White as her veil, and stood before the
 Queen
 As tremulously as foam upon the beach
 Stands in a wind, ready to break and fly,
 And when the Queen had added, "Get
 thee hence!"
 Fled frightened. Then that other left
 alone
 Sigh'd, and began to gather heart again,
 Saying in herself: "The simple, fearful
 child
 Meant nothing, but my own too-fearful
 guilt,
 Simpler than any child, betrays itself.
 But help me, Heaven, for surely I re-
 pent!
 For what is true repentance but in
 thought—
 Not even in inmost thought to think
 again
 The sins that made the past so pleasant
 to us?
 And I have sworn never to see him more,
 To see him more."

And even in saying this,
 Her memory from old habit of the mind
 Went slipping back upon the golden days
 In which she saw him first, when Lan-
 celot came,
 Reputed the best knight and goodliest
 man,
 Ambassador, to yield her to his lord
 Arthur, and led her forth, and far ahead
 Of his and her retinue moving, they,
 Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on love
 And sport and tilts and pleasure,—for
 the time

Was may-time, and as yet no sin was
dream'd,—
Rode under groves that look'd a paradise
Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth
That seem'd the heavens upbreking
thro' the earth,
And on from hill to hill, and every day
Beheld at noon in some delicious dale
The silk pavilions of King Arthur raised
For brief repast or afternoon repose
By couriers gone before ; and on again,
Till yet once more ere set of sun they
saw
The Dragon of the great Pendragonship,
That crown'd the state pavilion of the
King,
Blaze by the rushing brook or silent
well.

But when the Queen immersed in such
a trance,
And moving thro' the past unconscious-
ly,
Came to that point where first she saw
the King
Ride toward her from the city, sigh'd to
find
Her journey done, glanced at him,
thought him cold,
High, self-contain'd, and passionless, not
like him,
“Not like my Lancelot”—while she
brooded thus
And grew half-guilty in her thoughts
again,
There rode an armed warrior to the
doors.
A murmuring whisper thro' the nunnery
ran,
Then on a sudden a cry, “The King!”
She sat
Stiff-stricken, listening ; but when armed
feet
Thro' the long gallery from the outer
doors
Rang coming, prone from off her seat
she fell,
And grovell'd with her face against the
floor.
There with her milk-white arms and
shadowy hair
She made her face a darkness from the
King,
And in the darkness heard his armed feet
Pause by her ; then came silence, then a
voice,
Monotonous and hollow like a ghost's
Denouncing judgment, but, though
changed, the King's :

“Liest thou here so low, the child of
one
I honor'd, happy, dead before thy shame?
Well is it that no child is born of thee.
The children born of thee are sword and
fire,
Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,
The craft of kindred and the godless
hosts
Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern
Sea ;
Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my
right arm,
The mightiest of my knights, abode with
me,
Have everywhere about this land of
Christ
In twelve great battles ruining over-
thrown.
And knowest thou now from whence I
come—from him,
From waging bitter war with him ; and
he,
That did not shun to smite me in worse
way,
Had yet that grace of courtesey in him
left,
He spared to lift his hand against the
King
Who made him knight. But many a
knight was slain ;
And many more and all his kith and
kin
Clave to him, and abode in his own land.
And many more when Modred raised
revolt,
Forgetful of their troth and fealty, clave
To Modred, and a remnant stays with
me.
And of this remnant will I leave a part,
True men who love me still, for whom I
live,
To guard thee in the wild hour coming
on,
Lest but a hair of this low head be
harm'd.
Fear not ; thou shalt be guarded till my
death.
Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies
Have err'd not, that I march to meet my
doom.
Thou hast not made my life so sweet to
me,
That I the King should greatly care to
live ;
For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my
life.
Bear with me for the last time while I
show,

Even for thy sake, the sin which thou
 hast sinn'd. [law
 For when the Roman left us, and their
 Relax'd its hold upon us, and the ways
 Were fill'd with rapine, here and there
 a deed
 Of prowess done redress'd a random
 wrong,
 But I was first of all the kings who drew
 The knighthood-errant of this realm and
 all
 The realms together under me, their
 Head,
 In that fair Order of my Table Round,
 A glorious company, the flower of men,
 To serve as model for the mighty world,
 And be the fair beginning of a time.
 I made them lay their hands in mine
 and swear
 To reverence the King, as if he were
 Their conscience, and their conscience
 as their King,
 To break the heathen and uphold the
 Christ,
 To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
 To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
 To honor his own word as if his God's,
 To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
 To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
 And worship her by years of noble deeds,
 Until they won her; for indeed I knew
 Of no more subtle master under heaven
 Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
 Not only to keep down the base in man,
 But teach high thought, and amiable
 words
 And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
 And love of truth, and all that makes a
 man.
 And all this throve before I wedded thee,
 Believing, "Lo, mine helpmate, one to
 feel
 My purpose and rejoicing in my joy!"
 Then came thy shameful sin with Lance-
 lot;
 Then came the sin of Tristram and Isolt;
 Then others, following these my
 mightiest knights,
 And drawing foul ensample from fair
 names,
 Sinn'd also, till the loathsome opposite
 Of all my heart had destined did obtain,
 And all thro' thee! so that this life of
 mine
 I guard as God's high gift from scathe
 and wrong,
 Not greatly care to lose; but rather think
 How sad it were for Arthur, should he
 live,

To sit once more within his lonely hall,
 And miss the wonted number of my
 knights,
 And miss to hear high talk of noble deeds
 As in the golden days before thy sin,
 For which of us who might be left could
 speak
 Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance at
 thee?
 And in thy bowers of Camelot or of Usk
 Thy shadow still would glide from room
 to room,
 And I should evermore be vexed with thee
 In hanging robe or vacant ornament,
 Or ghostly footfall echoing on the stair.
 For think not, tho' thou wouldst not
 love thy lord,
 Thy lord has wholly lost his love for
 thee.
 I am not made of so slight elements.
 Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy
 shame.
 I hold that man the worst of public foes
 Who either for his own or children's
 sake,
 To save his blood from scandal, lets the
 wife
 Whom he knows false abide and rule
 the house:
 For being thro' his cowardice allow'd
 Her station, taken everywhere for pure,
 She like a new disease, unknown to men,
 Creeps, no precaution used, among the
 crowd,
 Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes, and
 saps
 The fealty of our friends, and stirs the
 pulse
 With devil's leaps, and poisons half the
 young.
 Worst of the worst were that man he
 that reigns!
 Better the King's waste hearth and
 aching heart
 Than thou reseated in thy place of light,
 The mockery of my people and their
 bane!"
 He paused, and in the pause she crept
 an inch
 Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.
 Far off a solitary trumpet blew
 Then waiting by the doors the war-horse
 neigh'd
 As at a friend's voice, and he spake
 again:
 "Yet think not that I come to urge
 thy crimes;

I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
I, whose vast pity almost makes me die
To see thee, laying there thy golden head,
My pride in happier summers, at my feet.
The wrath which forced my thoughts on
that fierce law,

The doom of treason and the flaming
death,—

When first I learned thee hidden here,—
is past.

The pang—which, while I weigh'd thy
heart with one

Too wholly true to dream untruth in
thee,

Made my tears burn—is also past—in
part.

And all is past, the sin is sinn'd, and I,
Lo, I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives! do thou for thine own soul the
rest.

But how to take last leave of all I loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to play
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded
form,

And beauty such as never woman wore,
Until it came a kingdom's curse with
thee—

I cannot touch thy lips, they are not
mine,

But Lancelot's; nay, they never were
the King's.

I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh,
And in the flesh thou hast sinn'd; and
mine own flesh.

Here looking down on thine polluted,
cries,

'I loathe thee;' yet not less, O Guine-
vere,

For I was ever virgin save for thee,
My love thro' flesh hath wrought into
my life

So far that my doom is, I love thee still.
Let no man dream but that I love thee
still.

Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,
And so thou lean on our fair father
Christ,

Hereafter in that world where all are
pure

We two may meet before high God, and
thou

Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine,
and know

I am thine husband—not a smaller soul,
Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me
that,

I charge thee, my last hope. Now must I
hence. [blow]

Thro' the thick night I hear the trumpet

They summon me their King to lead
mine hosts

Far down to that great battle in the west,
Where I must strike against the man
they call

My sister's son—no kin of mine, who
leagues

With Lords of the White Horse, heathen,
and knights,

Traitors—and strike him dead, and meet
myself

Death, or I know not what mysterious
doom.

And thou remaining here wilt learn the
event;

But hither shall I never come again,
Never lie by thy side, see thee no more—
Farewell!"

And while she grovell'd at his feet,
She felt the King's breath wander o'er
her neck,

And in the darkness o'er her fallen head
Perceived the waving of his hands that
blessed.

Then, listening till those armed steps
were gone,

Rose the pale Queen, and in her anguish
found

The casement: "peradventure," so she
thought,

"If I might see his face, and not be
seen."

And lo, he sat on horseback at the door!
And near him the sad nuns with each a
light

Stood, and he gave them charge about
the Queen,

To guard and foster her for evermore.
And while he spake to these his helm
was lower'd,

To which for crest the golden dragon
clung

Of Britain; so she did not see the face,
Which then was as an angel's, but she
saw,

Wet with the mists and smitten by the
lights,

The Dragon of the great Pendragonship
Blaze, making all the night a steam of
fire.

And even then he turn'd; and more and
more

The moony vapor rolling round the King,
Who seem'd the phantom of a giant in
it,

Enwound him fold by fold, and made
him gray

And grayer, till himself became as mist
Before her, moving ghostlike to his
doom.

Then she stretch'd out her arms and
cried aloud,
"O Arthur!" there her voice brake sud-
denly,
Then—as a stream that spouting from a
cliff
Falls in mid air, but gathering at the
base
Re-makes itself, and flashes down the
vale—
Went on in passionate utterance:

"Gone—my lord!
Gone thro' my sin to slay and to be slain!
And he forgave me, and I could not
speak.
Farewell? I should have answer'd his
farewell.
His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord
the King,
My own true lord! how dare I call him
mine?
The shadow of another cleaves to me,
And makes me one pollution. He, the
King,
Call'd me polluted. Shall I kill myself?
What help in that? I cannot kill my
sin,
If soul be soul, nor can I kill my shame;
No, nor by living can I live it down.
The days will grow to weeks, the weeks
to months,
The months will add themselves and
make the years,
The years will roll into the centuries,
And mine will ever be a name of scorn.
I must not dwell on that defeat of fame.
Let the world be; that is but of the
world—
What else? what hope? I think there
was a hope,
Except he mock'd me when he spake of
hope;
His hope he call'd it; but he never
mocks,
For mockery is the fume of little hearts.
And blessed be the King, who hath for-
given
My wickedness to him, and left me hope
That in mine own heart I can live down
sin
And be his mate hereafter in the heavens
Before high God! Ah great and gentle
lord,
Who wast, as is the conscience of a saint

Among his warring senses, to thy
knights—
To whom my false voluptuous pride,
that took
Full easily all impressions from below,
Would not look up, or half-despised the
height
To which I would not or I could not
climb—
I thought I could not breathe in that
fine air,
That pure severity of perfect light—
I yearn'd for warmth and color which I
found
In Lancelot—now I see thee what thou
art,
Thou art the highest and most human
too,
Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there
none
Will tell the King I love him tho' so
late?
Now—ere he goes to the great battle?
none!
Myself must tell him in that purer life,
But now it were too daring. Ah my God,
What might I not have made of thy fair
world,
Had I but loved thy highest creature
here?
It was my duty to have loved the
highest;
It surely was my profit had I known;
It would have been my pleasure had I
seen.
We needs must love the highest when
we see it.
Not Lancelot, nor another."

Here her hand
Grasp'd made her veil her eyes. She
look'd and saw
The novice, weeping, suppliant, and said
to her,
"Yea, little maid, for am I not for-
given?"
Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns
All round her, weeping; and her heart
was loosed
Within her, and she wept with these
and said:

"Ye know me then, that wicked one,
who broke
The vast design and purpose of the King.
O, shut me round with narrowing nun-
nery walls,
Meek maidens, from the voices crying,
'Shame!'

I must not scorn myself ; he loves me
still.

Let no one dream but that he loves me
still.

So let me, if you do not shudder at me,
Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with
you ;

Wear black and white, and be a nun
like you,

Fast with your fasts, not feasting with
your feasts ;

Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at
your joys,

But not rejoicing ; mingle with your
rites ;

Pray and be pray'd for ; lie before your
shrines ;

Do each low office of your holy house ;
Walk your dim cloister, and distribute
dole

To poor sick people, richer in His eyes
Who ransom'd us, and haler too than I ;
And treat their loathsome hurts and heal
mine own ;

And so wear out in alms-deed and in
prayer

The sombre close of that voluptuous day
Which wrought the ruin of my lord the
King."

She said. They took her to themselves ;
and she

Still hoping, fearing " Is it yet too late ?"
Dwelt with them, till in time their ab-
bess died.

Then she, for her good deeds and her pure
life,

And for the power of ministration in her,
And likewise for the high rank she had
borne,

Was chosen abbess, there, an abbess,
lived

For three brief years, and there, an ab-
bess, passed

To where beyond these voices there is
peace. 1859.

TITHONUS

THE woods decay, the woods decay and
fall,

The vapors weep their burthen to the
ground,

Man comes and tills the field and lies be-
neath,

And after many a summer dies the swan.
Me only cruel immortality

Consumes ; I wither slowly in thine arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,

A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a
dream

The ever-silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of
morn.

Alas ! for this gray shadow, once a
man—

So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he
seem'd

To his great heart none other than a
God !

I ask'd thee, " Give me immortality."
Then didst thou grant mine asking with
a smile,

Like wealthy men who care not how
they give.

But thy strong Hours indignant work'd
their wills,

And beat me down and marr'd and
wasted me,

And tho' they could not end me, left me
maim'd

To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
Immortal age beside immortal youth,

And all I was in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even
now,

Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill
with tears

To hear me ? Let me go ; take back thy
gift.

Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,

Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause, as is most meet
for all ?

A soft air fans the cloud apart ; there
comes

A glimpse of that dark world where I
was born.

Once more the old mysterious glimmer
steals

From thy pure brows, and from thy
shoulders pure,

And bosom beating with a heart renew'd.
Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the
gloom,

Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to
mine,

Ere yet they blind the stars, and the
wild team

Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke,
arise,

And shake the darkness from their
loosen'd manes,

And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.
Lo ! ever thus thou growest beautiful

In silence, then before thine answer
 given
 Departest, and thy tears are on my
 cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy
 tears,
 And make me tremble lest a saying
 learnt,

In days far-off, on that dark earth, be
 true?

"The Gods themselves cannot recall
 their gifts."

Ay me! ay me! with what another
 heart

In days far-off, and with what other
 eyes

I used to watch—if I be he that
 watch'd—

The lucid outline forming round thee;
 saw

The dim curls kindle into sunny rings;
 Changed with thy mystic change, and
 felt my blood

Glow with the glow that slowly crim-
 son'd all

Thy presence and thy portals, while I
 lay,

Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-
 warm

With kisses balmier than half-opening
 buds

Of April, and could hear the lips that
 kiss'd

Whispering I knew not what of wild
 and sweet,

Like that strange song I heard Apollo
 sing,

While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.
 Yet hold me not for ever in thine
 East;

How can my nature longer mix with
 thine?

Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
 Are all thy lights, and cold my wrin-
 led feet

Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when
 the steam

Floats up from those dim fields about
 the homes [die,

Of happy men that have the power to
 And grassy barrows of the happier dead.
 Release me, and restore me to the
 ground. [grave;

Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my
 Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by
 morn, [courts,

I earth in earth forget these empty
 And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

About 1835. 1860.

THE SAILOR BOY

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,
 Shot o'er the seething harbor-bar,
 And reach'd the ship and caught the
 rope,
 And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud
 He heard a fierce mermaid cry,
 "O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,
 I see the place where thou wilt lie.

"The sands and yeasty surges mix
 In caves about the dreary bay,
 And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,
 And in thy heart the scrawl shall
 play."

"Fool," he answer'd, "death is sure
 To those that stay and those that roam,
 But I will nevermore endure
 To sit with empty hands at home.

"My mother clings about my neck,
 My sisters crying, 'Stay for shame;'
 My father raves of death and wreck,—
 They are all to blame, they are all to
 blame.

"God help me! save I take my part
 Of danger on the roaring sea,
 A devil rises in my heart,
 Far worse than any death to me."
 1861.

MILTON

(ALCAICS)

O MIGHTY-MOUTH'D inventor of harmo-
 nies,
 O skill'd to sing of Time or Eternity,
 God-gifted organ-voice of England,
 Milton, a name to resound for ages;
 Whose Titan angels, Gabriel, Abdiel,
 Starr'd from Jehovah's gorgeous armo-
 ries,

Tower, as the deep-domed empyrean
 Rings to the roar of an angel onset!
 Me rather all that bowery loneliness,
 The brooks of Eden mazily murmuring,
 And bloom profuse and cedar arches
 Charm, as a wanderer out in ocean,
 Where some refulgent sunset of India
 Streams o'er a rich ambrosial ocean isle,
 And crimson-hued the stately palm-
 woods

Whisper in odorous heights of even
 1863.

W THE VOYAGE

We left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbor-mouth ;
And madly danced our hearts with joy,
As fast we fled to the south.
How fresh was every sight and sound
On open main or winding shore !
We knew the merry world was round,
And we might sail for evermore.

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail ;
The lady's-head upon the prow
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the gale.
The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,
And swept behind ; so quick the run
We felt the good ship shake and reel,
We seem'd to sail into the sun !

How oft we saw the sun retire,
And burn the threshold of the night,
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
And sleep beneath his pillar'd light !
How oft the purple-skirted robe
Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
As thro' the slumber of the globe
Again we dash'd into the dawn !

New stars all night above the brim
Of waters lighten'd into view ;
They climb'd as quickly, for the rim
Changed every moment as we flew.
Far ran the naked moon across
The houseless ocean's heaving field,
Or flying shone, the silver boss
Of her own halo's dusky shield.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,
High towns on hills were dimly seen ;
We passed long lines of Northern capes
And dewy Northern meadows green.
We came to warmer waves, and deep
Across the boundless east we drove,
Where those long swells of breaker
sweep
The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
Gloom'd the low coast and quivering
brine
With ashy rains, that spreading made
Fantastic plume or sable pine ;
By sands and steaming flats, and floods
Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
Glow'd for a moment as we passed.

O hundred shores of happy climes,
How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark,
At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;
At times a carven craft would shoot
From havens hid in fairy bowers,
With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,
But we nor paused for fruit nor
flowers.

For one fair Vision ever fled
Down the waste waters day and night
And still we follow'd where she led,
In hope to gain upon her flight.
Her face was evermore unseen,
And fixed upon the far sea-line ;
But each man murmur'd, " O my queen,
I follow till I make thee mine ! "

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd
Like Fancy made of golden air.
Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,
Now high on waves that idly burst
Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the
sea,
And now, the bloodless point reversed,
She bore the blade of Liberty.

And only one among us—him
We pleas'd not—he was seldom
pleas'd ;
He saw not far, his eyes were dim,
But ours he swore were all diseased.
" A ship of fools," he shriek'd in spite,
" A ship of fools," he sneer'd and
wept,
And overboard one stormy night
He cast his body, and on we swept.

And never sail of ours was fur'l'd,
Nor anchor dropped at eve or morn ;
We loved the glories of the world,
But laws of nature were our scorn.
For blasts would rise and rave and cease,
But whence were those that drove the
sail
Across the whirlwind's heart of peace,
And to and thro' the counter gale ?

Again to colder climes we came,
For still we follow'd where she led ;
Now mate is blind and captain lame,
And half the crew are sick or dead,
But, blind or lame or sick or sound,
We follow that which flies before ;
We know the merry world is round,
And we may sail for evermore.

NORTHERN FARMER

W

OLD STYLE

WHEER 'asta bean saaw long and mea
liggin' 'ere aloan?
Noorse? thoort nowt o' a noorse; whoy,
Doctor 's abean an' agoan;
Says that I moant 'a naw moor aale, but
I beant a fool;
Git ma my aale, fur I beant a-gawin'
to break my rule.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says
what 's nawways true;
Naw soort o' koind o' use to saay the
things that a do.
I 've 'ed my point o' aale ivry noight
sin' I bean 'ere.
An' I 've 'ed my quart ivry market-
noight for foorty year.

Parson 's a bean loikewise, an' a sittin'
ere o' my bed.
"The Amoighty 's a taakin' o' you¹ to
'issén, my friend," a said,
An' a tow'd ma my sins, an' 's toithe
were due, an' I gied it in hond;
I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done
boy the lond.

Larn'd a ma' bea. I reckons I 'annot
sa mooch to larn.
But a cast oop, thot a did, 'bout Bessy
Marris's barne.
Thaw a knaws I hallus voated wi'
Squire an' choorch an' staate,
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver
agin the raate.

An' I hallus coom'd to 's choorch afor
moy Sally wur dead,
An' 'eard 'um a bummin' awaay loike a
buzzard-clock² ower my 'ead,
An' I niver knaw'd whot a mean'd but
I thowt a 'ad summut to saay,
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said,
an' I coom'd awaay.

Bessy Marris's barne! tha knaws she
laid it to me.
Mowt a bean, mayhap, for she wur a
bad un, shea.
'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass,
tha mun understand;
I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done
boy the lond.

¹ ou as in *hour* [The notes on this poem are
Tennyson's.]
² Cockchafer.

But Parson a cooms an' a goas, an' a
says it easy an' freea:
"The Amoighty 's a taakin' o' you to
'issén, my friend," says 'ea.
I weant saay men be loiars, thaw sum-
mun said it in 'aaste;
But 'e reads wonn sarmin a weeak, an' I
'a stubb'd Thurnaby waaste.

D'ya moind the waaste, my lass? naw,
naw, tha was not born then;
Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eard
'um mysén;
Moast loike a butter-bump,¹ fur I 'eard
'um about an' about,
But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an'
raaved an' rembled 'um out.

Keaper's it wur; fo' they fun 'um theer
a-laid o' 'is faace
Down i' the world 'enemies² afor I
coom'd to the plaace.
Noaks or Thimbleby—toaner³ 'ed shot
'um as dead as a naail.
Noaks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize—
but git ma my aale.

Dubbut looök at the waaste; theer
warn't not feead for a cow;
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an'
look at it now—
Warn't worth nowt a haacre, an' now
theer 's lots o' feead,
Fourscoor yows⁴ upon it, an' some on it
down i' seead.⁵

Nobbut a bit on it 's left, an' I mean'd to
'a stubb'd it at fall,
Done it ta-year I mean'd, an' runn'd plow
thruff it an' all,
If Godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let
ma aloan,—
Mea, wi' haate hoonderd haacre o'
Squire's, an lond o' my oan.

Do Godamoighty knaw what a's doing
a-taakin' o' mea?
I beant wonn as saws 'ere a bean an yon-
der a pea;
An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all—a'
dear, a' dear!
And I 'a managed for Squire coom
Michaelmas thutty year.

A mowt 'a taean owd Joanes, as 'ant not
a 'aapoth o' sense,
Or a mowt a' taean young Robins—a
niver mended a fence;

¹ Bittern. ² Anemones. ³ One or other.
⁴ ou as in *hour*. ⁵ Clover.

But Godamoighty a moost taake mea an'
taake ma now,
Wi' aaf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby
hoalms to plow!

Looðk 'ow quoloty smoiles when they
seas ma a passin' boy,
Says to thessén, naw doubt, "What a
man a bea sewer-loi!"
Fur they knaws what I bean to Squoire
sin' fust a coom'd to the 'All;
I done moy duty by Squoire an' I done
moy duty boy hall.

Squoire's i' Lunnon, an' summun I
reckons 'ull 'a to wroite,
For whoa's to howd the lond ater mea
thot muddles ma quoit;
Sartin-sewer I bea thot a weant niver
give it to Joanes,
Naw, nor a moant to Robins—a niver
rembles the stoans.

But summun 'ull come ater mea mayhap
wi' 'is kittle o' steam
Huzzin' an' maazin' the blessed fealds
wi' the devil's oan team.
Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife
they says is sweet,
But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I
couldn abear to see it.

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn
bring ma the aale?
Doctor's a 'toattler, lass, an a's hallus i'
the owd taale;
I weant break rules fur Doctor, a knaws
naw moor nor a floy;
Git ma my aale, I tell tha, an' if I mun
doy I mun doy. 1864.

THE FLOWER¹

ONCE in a golden hour
I cast to earth a seed.
Up there came a flower,
The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
Thro' my garden-bower,
And muttering discontent
Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall
It wore a crown of light,
But thieves from o'er the wall
Stole the seed by night;

¹ See the Life of Tennyson II, 10-11.

Sow'd it far and wide
By every town and tower,
Till all the people cried
"Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable:
He that runs may read.
Most can raise the flowers now
For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,
And some are poor indeed;
And now again the people
Call it but a weed. 1864.

IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ

ALL along the valley, stream that flashest
white,
Deepening thy voice with the deepening
of the night,
All along the valley, where thy waters
flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty
years ago.
All along the valley, while I walk'd to-
day,
The two and thirty years were a mist
that rolls away;
For all along the valley, down thy rocky
bed,
Thy living voice to me was as the voice
of the dead,
And all along the valley, by rock and
cave and tree,
The voice of the dead was a living voice
to me. 1861. 1864.

A DEDICATION

DEAR, near and true,—no truer Time
himself
Can prove you, tho' he make you ever-
more
Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life
Shoots to the fall,—take this and pray
that he
Who wrote it, honoring yoursweet faith
in him,
May trust himself; and after praise and
scorn, [world,
As one who feels the immeasurable
Attain the wise indifference of the wise;
And after autumn past—if left to pass
His autumn into seeming-leafless days—
Draw toward the long frost and longest
night, [fruit
Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the
Which in our winter woodland looks a
flower. 1864.

WAGES

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory
of song,

Paid with a voice flying by to be lost
on an endless sea—

Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to
right the wrong—

Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no
lover of glory she ;

Give her the glory of going on, and still
to be.

The wages of sin is death : if the wages
of Virtue be dust,

Would she have heart to endure for
the life of the worm and the fly ?

She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet
seats of the just,

To rest in a golden grove, or to bask
in a summer sky ;

Give her the wages of going on, and not
to die. 1868.

FROM THE COMING OF ARTHUR

MERLIN'S RIDDLE

RAIN, rain, and sun ! a rainbow in the
sky !

A young man will be wiser by and by ;
An old man's wit may wander ere he die.

Rain, rain, and sun ! a rainbow on the
lea !

And truth is this to me, and that to thee ;
And truth or clothed or naked let it be.

Rain, sun, and rain ! and the free blos-
som blows ;

Sun, rain, and sun ! and where is he who
knows ?

From the great deep to the great deep
he goes. 1869.

TRUMPET SONG

Blow trumpet, for the world is white
with May !

Blow trumpet, the long night hath roll'd
away !

Blow thro' the living world—" Let the
King reign ! "

Shall Rome or Heathen rule in Arthur's
realm ?

Flash brand and lance, fall battle-axe
upon helm,

Fall battle-axe, and flash brand ! Let
the King reign !

Strike for the King and live ! his knights
have heard

That God hath told the King a secret
word.

Fall battle-axe, and flash brand ! Let
the King reign !

Blow trumpet ! he will lift us from the
dust.

Blow trumpet ! live the strength, and
die the lust !

Clang battle-axe, and clash brand ! Let
the King reign !

Strike for the King and die ! and if thou
diest,

The King is king, and ever wills the
highest.

Clang battle-axe, and clash brand ! Let
the King reign !

Blow, for our Sun is mighty in his May !
Blow, for our Sun is mightier day by
day !

Clang battle-axe, and clash brand ! Let
the King reign !

The King will follow Christ, and we the
King,

In whom high God hath breathed a
secret thing.

Fall battle-axe, and flash brand ! Let
the King reign ! 1874.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas,
the hills and the plains,—

Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him
who reigns ?

Is not the Vision He, tho' He be not that
which He seems ?

Dreams are true while they last, and do
we not live in dreams ?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of
body and limb,

Are they not sign and symbol of thy
division from Him ?

Dark is the world to thee ; thyself art
the reason why,

For is He not all but thou, that hast
power to feel " I am I " ?

Glory about thee, without thee ; and
thou fulfillest thy doom,

Making Him broken gleams and a stifled
splendor and gloom.

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and
Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer
than hands and feet.

God is law, say the wise; O soul, and
let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is
yet His voice.

Law is God, say some; no God at all,
says the fool,
For all we have power to see is a straight
staff bent in a pool;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the
eye of man cannot see;
But if we could see and hear, this
Vision—were it not He? 1869.

FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my
hand,

Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in
all,

I should know what God and man is.
1869.

NORTHERN FARMER

NEW STYLE

DOSN'T thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they
canters awaay?

Proputty, proputty, proputty—that's
what I 'ears 'em saay.

Proputty, proputty, proputty—Sam,
thou's an ass for thy pains;
Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs, nor
in all thy brains.

Woa—theer's a craw to pluck wi' tha,
Sam: yon 's parson's 'ouse—

Dosn't thou know that a man mun be
eather a man or a mouse?

Time to think on it then; for thou'll be
twenty to weeak.¹

Proputty, proputty—woa then, woa—let
ma 'ear mysen speak.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as bean
a-talkin' o' thee;

Thou's bean talkin' to muther, an' she
bean a-tellin' it me.

Thou'll not marry for munny—thou's
sweet upo' parson's lass—

¹ This week.

Noa—thou 'll marry for luvv—an' we
boath on us thinks tha an ass.

Seea'd her to-daay goa by—Saaint's-daay
—they was ringing the bells.

She's a beauty, thou thinks—an' soa is
scoors o' gells,

Them as 'as munny an' 'all—wot's a
beauty?—the flower as blaws.

But proputty, proputty sticks, an' pro-
putty, proputty grows.

Do'ant be stunt;¹ taake time. I knaws
what maakes tha sa mad.

Warn't I craazed fur the lasses mysén
when I wur a lad?

But I knaw'd a Quaaker feller as often
'as tow'd ma this:

“Doant thou marry for munny, but goa
wheer munny is!”

An' I went wheer munny war; an' thy
muther coom to 'and,

Wi' lots o' munny laa'd by, an' a nicetish
bit o' land.

Maaybe she warn't a beauty—I niver giv
it a thowt—

But warn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss
as a lass as 'ant nowt?

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weant 'a
nowt when 'e 's dead,

Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and
addle² her bread.

Why? fur 'e 's nobbut a curate, an'
weant niver get hissén clear,

An' 'e maade the bed as 'e ligs on afoor
'e coom'd to the shere.

An' thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots
o' Varsity debt,

Stook to his taail they did, an' 'e 'ant
got shut on 'em yet.

An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi'
noan to lend 'im a shove,

Woorse nor a far-welter'd³ yowe; fur,
Sammy, 'e married fur luvv.

Luvv? what's luvv? thou can luvv thy
lass an' 'er munny too,

Maakin' 'em goa together, as they've good
right to do.

Couldn't I luvv thy muther by cause 'o
'er munny laa'd by?

Naay—fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor
fur it; reason why.

¹ Obstinate.

² Earn.

³ Or, fow-welter'd,—said of a sheep lying on its
back in the furrow.

Ay, an' thy muther says thou wants to
marry the lass,
Cooms of a gentleman burn; an' we
boath on us thinks tha an ass.
Woa then, proputtie, wiltha?—an ass as
near as mays nowt¹—
Woa then, wiltha? dangtha!—the bees
is as fell as owt.²

Break me a bit o' the esh for his 'ead,
lad, out o' the fence!
Gentleman burn! what's gentleman
burn? is it shillins an' pence?
Proputtie, proputtie's ivrything 'ere, an',
Sammy, I'm blest
If it is n't the saame oop yonder, fur
them as 'as it's the best.

Tis 'n them as 'as munny as breaks into
'ouses an' steals,
Them as 'as coats to their backs an'
taakes their regular meals.
Noa, but it 's them as niver knaws wheer
a meal's to be 'ad.
Taake my word for it Sammy, the poor
in a loomp is bad.

Them or thir feythurs, tha sees, mun 'a
bean a laazy lot,
Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin' whin-
iver munny was got.
Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leastways 'is
munny was 'id.
But 'e tued an' moil'd issén dead, an' 'e
died a good un, 'e did.

Looók thou theer wheer Wigglesby beck
cooms out by the 'ill!
Feyther run oop to the farm, an' I runs
oop to the mill;
An' I 'll run oop to the brig, an' that
thou 'll live to see;
And if thou marries a good un I 'll leave
the land to thee.

Thim's my noations, Sammy, wheerby
I means to stick;
But if thou marries a bad un, I 'll leave
the land to Dick.—
Coom oop, proputtie, proputtie—that's
what I 'ears 'im saay—
Proputtie, proputtie, proputtie—canter
an' canter awaay. 1870.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA IN 1782

O THOU that sendest out the man
To rule by land and sea,

¹ Makes nothing.

² The flies are as fierce as anything.

Strong mother of a lion-line,
Be proud of those strong sons of thine
Who wrench'd their rights from thee!

What wonder if in noble heat
Those men thine arms withstood,
Retought the lesson thou hadst taught,
And in thy spirit with thee fought—
Who sprang from English blood!

But thou rejoice with liberal joy,
Lift up thy rocky face,
And shatter, when the storms are black,
In many a streaming torrent back,
The seas that shock thy base!

Whatever harmonies of law
The growing world assume,
Thy work is thine—the single note
From that deep chord which Hampden
smote
Will vibrate to the doom. 1872.

THE VOICE AND THE PEAK

THE voice and the Peak,
Far over summit and lawn,
The lone glow and long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones
of dawn!

All night have I heard the voice
Rave over the rocky bar,
But thou wert silent in heaven,
Above thee glided the star.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak.
That standest high above all?
"I am the voice of the Peak,
I roar and rave, for I fall.

"A thousand voices go
To North, South, East, and West;
They leave the heights and are troubled,
And moan and sink to their rest.

"The fields are fair beside them,
The chestnut towers in his bloom;
But they—they feel the desire of the
deep—
Fall, and follow their doom.

"The deep has power on the height,
And the height has power on the deep;
They are raised for ever and ever,
And sink again into sleep."

Not raised for ever and ever,
But when their cycle is o'er,

The valley, the voice, the peak, the star
Pass, and are found no more.

The Peak is high and flush'd
At his highest with sunrise fire;
The Peak is high, and the stars are high,
And the thought of a man is higher.

A deep below the deep,
And a height beyond the height!
Our hearing is not hearing,
And our seeing is not sight.

The voice and the Peak
Far into heaven withdrawn,
The lone glow and long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones
of dawn! 1874.

LYRICS FROM QUEEN MARY

MILKMAID'S SONG

SHAME upon you, Robin,
Shame upon you now!
Kiss me would you? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Daisies grow again,
Kingcups blow again,
And you came and kiss'd me milking
the cow.

Robin came behind me,
Kiss'd me well, I vow.
Cuff him could I? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Swallows fly again,
Cuckoos cry again,
And you came and kiss'd me milking
the cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,
Come and kiss me now,
Help it can I? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Ringdoves coo again,
All things woo again.
Come behind and kiss me milking
the cow!

LOW, LUTE, LOW!

HAPLESS doom of woman happy in be-
trothing!
Beauty passes like a breath, and love is
lost in loathing.
Low, my lute; speak low, my lute, but
say the world is nothing—
Low, lute, low!

Love will hover round the flowers when
they first awaken;
Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not be
overtaken.

Low, my lute! O, low, my lute! we fade
and are forsaken—

Low, dear lute, low!

1875.

MONTENEGRO

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle
sails,
They kept their faith, their freedom, on
the height,
Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day
and night
Against the Turk; whose inroad no-
where scales
Their headlong passes, but his footstep
fails,
And red with blood the Crescent reels
from fight
Before their dauntless hundreds, in
prone fight
By thousands down the crags and thro'
the vales.
O smallest among peoples! rough rock-
throne
Of Freedom! warriors beating back the
swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great Tsernogora! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake
the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier moun-
taineers. 1877.

THE REVENGE¹

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET

I

AT Flores in the Azores Sir Richard
Grenville lay,
And a pinnacle, like a flutter'd bird,
came flying from far away;
"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have
sighted fifty-three!"
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard:
"Fore God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my
ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must
fly, but follow quick,
We are six ships of the line; can we
fight with fifty-three?"

¹ See the Life of Tennyson, II. 251-2.

II

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: "I
 know you are no coward;
 You fly them for a moment to fight with
 them again.
 But I 've ninety men and more that are
 lying sick ashore.
 I should count myself the coward if I
 left them, my Lord Howard,
 To these Inquisition dogs and the devil-
 doms of Spain."

III

So Lord Howard past away with five
 ships of war that day,
 Till he melted like a cloud in the silent
 summer heaven;
 But Sir Richard bore in hand all hissick
 men from the land
 Very carefully and slow,
 Men of Bideford in Devon,
 And we laid them on the ballast down
 below:
 For we brought them all aboard,
 And they blest him in their pain, that
 they were not left to Spain,
 To the thumb-screw and the stake, for
 the glory of the Lord.

IV

He had only a hundred seamen to work
 the ship and to fight
 And he sailed away from Flores till the
 Spaniard came in sight,
 With his huge sea-castles heaving upon
 the weather bow.
 "Shall we fight or shall we fly?
 Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
 For to fight is but to die!
 There 'll be little of us left by the time
 this sun be set."
 And Sir Richard said again: "We be all
 good English men.
 Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the
 children of the devil,
 For I never turn'd my back upon Don or
 devil yet."

V

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and
 we roar'd a hurrah, and so
 The little Revenge ran on sheer into the
 heart of the foe,
 With her hundred fighters on deck, and
 her ninety sick below.

For half of their fleet to the right and
 half to the left were seen,
 And the little Revenge ran on thro' the
 long sea-lane between.

VI

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down
 from their decks and laugh'd,
 Thousands of their seamen made mock
 at the mad little craft
 Running on and on, till delay'd
 By their mountain-like San Philip that,
 of fifteen hundred tons,
 And up-shadowing high above us with
 her yawning tiers of guns,
 Took the breath from our sails, and we
 stay'd.

VII

And while now the great San Philip
 hung above us like a cloud
 Whence the thunderbolt will fall
 Long and loud,
 Four galleons drew away
 From the Spanish fleet that day,
 And two upon the larboard and two
 upon the starboard lay,
 And the battle-thunder broke from them
 all.

VIII

But anon the great San Philip, she be-
 thought herself and went,
 Having that within her womb that had
 left her ill content;
 And the rest they came aboard us, and
 they fought us hand to hand,
 For a dozen times they came with their
 pikes and musqueteers,
 And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a
 dog that shakes his ears
 When he leaps from the water to the
 land.

IX

And the sun went down, and the stars
 came out far over the summer
 sea,
 But never a moment ceased the fight of
 the one and the fifty-three.
 Ship after ship, the whole night long,
 their high-built galleons came,
 Ship after ship, the whole night long,
 with her battle-thunder and flame;
 Ship after ship, the whole night long,
 drew back with her dead and her
 shame.
 For some were sunk and many were
 shatter'd, and so could fight us no
 more—

God of battles, was ever a battle like
this in the world before?

X

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the
short summer night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had
left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dress-
ing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in
the side and the head,
And he said, "Fight on! fight on!"

XI

And the night went down, and the sun
smiled out far over the summer
sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides
lay round us all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for
they fear'd that we still could
sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were
slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for
life
In the crash of the cannonades and the
desperate strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were
most of them stark and cold.
And the pikes were all broken or bent,
and the powder was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were
lying over the side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English
pride:
"We have fought such a fight for a day
and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink
her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the
hands of Spain!"

XII

And the gunner said, "Ay, ay," but the
seamen made reply:

"We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if
we yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike
another blow."
And the lion there lay dying, and they
yielded to the foe.

XIII

And the stately Spanish men to their
flagship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old
Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with
their courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he
cried:
"I have fought for Queen and Faith
like a valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is
bound to do.
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Gren-
ville die!"
And he fell upon their decks, and he
died.

XIV

And they stared at the dead that had
been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of
Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship
and his English few;
Was he devil or man? He was devil for
aught they knew,
But they sank his body with honor down
into the deep.
And they mann'd the Revenge with a
swarthier alien crew,
And away she sail'd with her loss and
long'd for her own;
When a wind from the lands they had
ruin'd awoke from sleep,
And the water began to heave and the
weather to moan,
And or ever that evening ended a great
gale blew,
And a wave like the wave that is raised
by an earthquake grew,
Till it smote on their hulls and their sails
and their masts and their flags,
And the whole sea plunged and fell on
the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,
And the little Revenge herself went
down by the island crags
To be lost evermore in the main.

1878.

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW¹

I

BANNER of England, not for a season, O
 banner of Britain, hast thou
 Floated in conquering battle or flapped
 to the battle-cry!
 Never with mightier glory than when
 we had rear'd thee on high
 Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly
 siege of Lucknow—
 Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but
 ever we raised thee anew,
 And ever upon the topmost roof our
 banner of England blew.

II

Frail were the works that defended the
 hold that we held with our lives—
 Women and children among us, God
 help them, our children and wives!
 Hold it we might—and for fifteen days
 or for twenty at most.
 “Never surrender, I charge you, but
 every man die at his post!”
 Voice of the dead whom we loved, our
 Lawrence, the best of the brave;
 Cold were his brows when we kiss'd
 him—we laid him that night in
 his grave.
 “Every man die at his post!” and there
 hail'd on our houses and halls
 Death from their rifle bullets, and death
 from their cannon-balls,
 Death in our innermost chamber, and
 death at our slight barricade,
 Death while we stood with the musket,
 and death while we stooped to the
 spade,
 Death to the dying, and wounds to the
 wounded, for often there fell,
 Striking the hospital wall, crashing
 thro' it, their shot and their shell,
 Death—for their spies were among us,
 their marksmen were told of our
 best,
 So that the brute bullet broke thro' the
 brain that could think for the
 rest;
 Bullets would sing by our foreheads,
 and bullets would rain at our
 feet—

¹ “The old flag used during the defence of the Residency, was hoisted on the Lucknow flagstaff by General Wilson, and the soldiers who still survived from the siege were all mustered on parade in honor of this poem, when my son Lionel (who died on his journey from India) visited Lucknow. A tribute overwhelmingly touching” (Tennyson.)

Fire from ten thousand at once of the
 rebels that girdled us round—
 Death at the glimpse of a finger from
 over the breadth of a street,
 Death from the heights of the mosque
 and the palace, and death in the
 ground!
 Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine!
 down, down! and creep thro' the
 hole!
 Keep the revolver in hand! you can
 hear him—the murderous mole!
 Quiet, ah! quiet—wait till the point of
 the pickaxe be thro'!
 Click with the pick, coming nearer and
 nearer again than before—
 Now let it speak, and you fire, and the
 dark pioneer is no more;
 And ever upon the topmost roof our
 banner of England blew!

III

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many
 times, and it chanced on a day
 Soon as the blast of that underground
 thunder-clap echo'd away
 Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur
 like so many fiends in their hell—
 Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on
 volley, and yell upon yell—
 Fiercely on all the defences our myriad
 enemy fell.
 What have they done? where is it?
 Out yonder. Guard the Redan!
 Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the
 Bailey-gate! storm, and it ran
 Surging and swaying all round us, as
 ocean on every side
 Plunges and heaves at a bank that is
 daily drowned by the tide—
 So many thousands that, if they be bold
 enough, who shall escape?
 Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall
 know we are soldiers and men!
 Ready! take aim at their leaders—their
 masses are gapp'd with our grape—
 Backward they reel like the wave, like
 the wave fingering forward again,
 Flying and foil'd at the last by the
 handful they could not subdue;
 And ever upon the topmost roof our
 banner of England blew!

IV

Handful of men as we were, we were
 English in heart and in limb,
 Strong with the strength of the race to
 command, to obey, to endure,

Each of us fought as if hope for the gar-
rison hung but on him;
Still—could we watch at all points? we
were every day fewer and fewer.
There was a whisper among us, but only
a whisper that past:
“Children and wives—if the tigers leap
into the fold unawares—
Every man die at his post—and the foe
may outlive us at last—
Better to fall by the hands that they
love, than to fall into theirs!”
Roar upon roar in a moment two mines
by the enemy sprung
Clove into perilous chasms our walls and
our poor palisades.
Riflemen, true is your heart, but be sure
that your hand be as true!
Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed
are your flank fusillades—
Twice do we hurl them to earth from
the ladders to which they had
clung,
Twice from the ditch where they shelter
we drive them with hand-gre-
nades;
And ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew!

V

Then on another wild morning another
wild earthquake out-tore
Clean from our lines of defence ten or
twelve good paces or more.
Riflemen, high on the roof, hidden there
from the light of the sun
One has leaped up on the breach, crying
out: “Follow me, follow me!”—
Mark him—he falls! then another and
him too, and down goes he.
Had they been bold enough then, who
can tell but the traitors had won?
Boardings and rafters and doors—an
embrasure! make way for the gun!
Now double-charge it with grape! It is
charged and we fire, and they run.
Praise to our Indian brothers, and let
the dark face have his due!
Thanks to the kindly dark faces who
fought with us, faithful and few,
Fought with the bravest among us, and
drove them, and smote them, and
slew,
That ever upon the topmost roof our
banner in India blew.

VI

Men will forget what we suffer and not
what we do. We can fight!

But to be soldier all day, and be sentinel
all thro’ the night—
Ever the mine and assault, our sallies,
their lying alarms,
Bugles and drums in the darkness, and
shoutings and soundings to arms,
Ever the labor of fifty that had to be
done by five,
Ever the marvel among us that one
should be left alive,
Ever the day with its traitorous death
from the loopholes around,
Ever the night with its coffinless corpse
to be laid in the ground,
Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge
of cataract skies,
Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite
torment of flies,
Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing
over an English field,
Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound
that *would* not be heal’d,
Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-
pitiless knife,—
Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never
could save us a life,
Valor of delicate women who tended
the hospital bed,
Horror of women in travail among the
dying and dead,
Grief for our perishing children, and
never a moment for grief,
Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering
hopes of relief,
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher’d
for all that we knew—
Then day and night, day and night, com-
ing down on the still-shatter’d
walls
Millions of musket-bullets, and thou-
sands of cannon-balls—
But ever upon the topmost roof our
banner of England blew.

VII

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true
what was told by the scout,
Outram and Havelock breaking their
way through the fell mutineers?
Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing
again in our ears?
All on a sudden the garrison utter a
joyous shout,
Havelock’s glorious Highlanders answer
with conquering cheers,
Sick from the hospital echo them, women
and children come out,
Blessing the wholesome white faces of
Havelock’s good fusileers.

Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the
 Highlander wet with their tears !
 Dance to the pibroch !—saved ! we are
 saved !—is it you ? is it you ?
 Saved by the valor of Havelock, saved
 by the blessing of heaven !
 “Hold it for fifteen days !” we have
 held it for eighty-seven !
 And ever aloft on the palace roof the old
 banner of England blew. 1879.

RIZPAH¹

17—

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind
 over land and sea—
 And Willy's voice in the wind, “O
 mother, come out to me !”
 Why should he call me to-night, when
 he knows that I cannot go ?
 For the downs are as bright as day, and
 the full moon stares at the snow.

We should be seen, my dear ; they would
 spy us out of the town.
 The loud black nights for us, and the
 storm rushing over the down,
 When I cannot see my own hand, but
 am led by the creak of the chain,
 And grovel and grope for my son till I
 find myself drenched with the
 rain.

Anything fallen again ? nay—what was
 there left to fall ?

I have taken them home, I have num-
 ber'd the bones, I have hidden
 them all.

What am I saying ? and what are *you* ?
 do you come as a spy !

Falls ? what falls ? who knows ? As the
 tree falls so must it lie.

Who let her in ? how long has she been ?
 you—what have you heard ?

Why did you sit so quiet ? you never
 have spoken a word.

O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none
 of their spies—

But the night has crept into my heart,
 and begun to darken my eyes.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what
 should *you* know of the night,

The blast and the burning shame and
 the bitter frost and the fright ?

I have done it, while you were asleep—
 you were only made for the day.

I have gather'd my baby together—and
 now you may go your way.

Nay—for it's kind of you, madam, to sit
 by an old dying wife.

But say nothing hard of my boy, I have
 only an hour of life.

I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he
 went out to die.

“They dared me to do it,” he said, and
 he never has told me a lie.

I whipped him for robbing an orchard
 once when he was but a child—

“The farmer dared me to do it,” he said ;
 he was always so wild—

And idle—and could n't be idle—my
 Willy—he never could rest.

The King should have made him a sol-
 dier, he would have been one of
 his best.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates,
 and they never would let him be
 good ;

They swore that he dare not rob the
 mail, and he swore that he would ;

And he took no life, but he took one
 purse, and when all was done

He flung it among his fellows—“I'll
 none of it,” said my son.

I came into court to the judge and the
 lawyers. I told them my tale,

God's own truth—but they kill'd him,
 they kill'd him for robbing the
 mail.

They hang'd him in chains for a show—
 we had always borne a good
 name—

To be hang'd for a thief—and then put
 away—is n't that enough shame ?

Dust to dust—low down—let us hide !
 but they set him so high

That all the ships of the world could
 stare at him, passing by.

God'll pardon the hell-black raven and
 horrible fowls of the air,

But not the black heart of the lawyer
 who kill'd him and hang'd him
 there.

And the jailer forced me away. I had
 bid him my last good-bye ;

They had fasten'd the door of his cell.
 “O mother !” I heard him cry.

I could n't get back tho' I tried, he had
 something further to say,

And now I never shall know it. The
 jailer forced me away.

¹ See the Life of Tennyson II, 249-251.

Then since I could n't but hear that cry
of my boy that was dead,
They seized me and shut me up: they
fasten'd me down on my bed.

"Mother, O mother!"—he call'd in the
dark to me year after year—
They beat me for that, they beat me—
you know that I could n't but
hear;

And then at the last they found I had
grown so stupid and still—
They let me abroad again—but the crea-
tures had worked their will.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of
my bone was left—

I stole them all from the lawyers—and
you, will you call it a theft?—

My baby, the bones that had suck'd me,
the bones that had laughed and
had cried—

Theirs? O, no! they are mine—not
theirs—they had moved in my
side.

Do you think I was scared by the bones?
I kiss'd 'em, I buried 'em all—

I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night
by the churchyard wall.

My Willy 'll rise up whole when the
trumpet of judgment 'll sound,
But I charge you never to say that I
laid him in holy ground.

They would scratch him up—they would
hang him again on the cursed tree.
Sin? O, yes, we are sinners, I know—let
all that be,

And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's
goodwill toward men—

"Full of compassion and mercy, the
Lord"—let me hear it again;

"Full of compassion and mercy—long-
suffering." Yes, O, yes!

For the lawyer is born but to murder—
the Saviour lives but to bless.

He 'll never put on the black cap except
for the worst of the worst,

And the first may be last—I have heard
it in church—and the last may be
first.

Suffering—O, long-suffering—yes, as the
Lord must know,

Year after year in the mist and the wind
and the shower and the snow.

Heard, have you? what? they have told
you he never repented his sin.

How do they know it? are *they* his
mother? are *you* of his kin?

Heard! have you ever heard, when the
storm on the downs began,
The wind that 'll wail like a child and
the sea that 'll moan like a man?

Election, Election, and Reprobation—
it's all very well.

But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall
not find him in hell.

For I cared so much for my boy that the
Lord has look'd into my care,

And He means me I 'm sure to be happy
with Willy, I know not where.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul,
that is all your desire—

Do you think that I care for *my* soul if
my boy be gone to the fire?

I have been with God in the dark—go,
go, you may leave me alone—

You never have borne a child—you are
just as hard as a stone.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think
that you mean to be kind,

But I cannot hear what you say for my
Willy's voice in the wind—

The snow and the sky so bright—he
used but to call in the dark,

And he calls to me now from the
church and not from the gibbet—
for hark!

Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is
coming—shaking the walls—

Willy—the moon 's in a cloud—Good-
night. I am going. He calls.

1880.

SONG FROM THE SISTERS

O DIVINER air,
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust, the
glare,

Far from out the west in shadowin,
showers,

Over all the meadow baked and bare,
Making fresh and fair

All the bowers and the flowers,
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,

Over all this weary world of ours,
Breathe, diviner Air!

O diviner light,
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon with
night,

Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding
showers,

Far from out a sky for ever bright,
Over all the woodland's flooded bowers,

Over all the meadow's drowning flowers,
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,
Break, diviner light ! 1880.

W TO VIRGIL ¹

ROMAN VIRGIL, thou that singest Ilion's
lofty temples robed in fire,
Ilion falling, Rome arising, wars, and
filial faith, and Dido's pyre ;

Landscape-lover, lord of language more
than he that sang the " Works and
Days,"

All the chosen coin of fancy flashing out
from many a golden phrase ;

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,
tilth and vineyard, hive and horse
and herd ;

All the charm of all the Muses
often flowering in a lonely word ;

Poet of the happy Tityrus piping under-
neath his beechen bowers ;

Poet of the poet-satyr whom the laugh-
ing shepherd bound with flowers ;

Chanter of the Pollio, glorying in the
blissful years again to be,

Summers of the snakeless meadow, un-
laborious earth and oarless sea ;

Thou that seest Universal Nature moved
by Universal Mind ;

Thou majestic in thy sadness at the
doubtful doom of human kind ;

Light among the vanish'd ages ; star
that gildest yet this phantom
shore ;

Golden branch amid the shadows, kings
and realms that pass to rise no
more ;

Now thy Forum roars no longer, fallen
every purple Cæsar's dome—

Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm sound
forever of Imperial Rome—

Now the Rome of slaves hath perish'd,
and the Rome of freemen holds her
place,

I, from out the Northern Island sunder'd
once from all the human race,

¹ "To Virgil was written at the request of the Mantuans for the nineteenth centenary of Virgil's Death." (Life of Tennyson, II, 320.)

I salute thee, Mantovano, I that loved
thee since my day began,
Wielder of the stateliest measure ever
moulded by the lips of man.
1882.

"FRATER AVE ATQUE VALE"

Row us out from Desenzano, to you
Sirmione row !

So they row'd, and there we landed—"O
venusta Sirmio !"

There to me thro' all the groves of olive
in the summer glow,

There beneath the Roman ruin where the
purple flowers grow,

Came that "Ave atque Vale" of the
Poet's hopeless woe,

Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen
hundred years ago

"Frater Ave atque Vale"—as we
wander'd to and fro

Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the
Garda Lake below

Sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-
silvery Sirmio ! 1883.

EPILOGUE TO THE CHARGE OF
THE HEAVY BRIGADE

And here the Singer for his art

Not all in vain may plead

"The song that nerves a nation's heart
Is in itself a deed." 1885.

W VASTNESS

MANY a hearth upon our dark globe sighs
after many a vanish'd face,

Many a planet by many a sun may roll
with the dust of a vanish'd race.

Raving politics, never at rest—as this
poor earth's pale history runs,—

What is it all but a trouble of ants in the
gleam of a million million of suns ?

Lies upon this side, lies upon that side,
truthless violence mourn'd by the
wise,

Thousands of voices drowning his own
in a popular torrent of lies upon
lies ;

Stately purposes, valor in battle, glorious
annals of army and fleet,

Death for the right cause, death for the
wrong cause, trumpets of victory,
groans of defeat ;

Innocence seethed in her mother's milk,
and Charity setting the martyr
aflake ;

Thralldom who walks with the banner of
Freedom, and recks not to ruin a
realm in her name.

Faith at her zenith, or all but lost in the
gloom of doubts that darken the
schools ;

Craft with a bunch of all-heal in her
hand, follow'd up by her vassal
legion of fools ;

Trade flying over a thousand seas with
her spice and her vintage, her silk
and her corn ;

Desolate offing, sailorless harbors, fam-
ishing populace, wharves forlorn ;

Star of the morning, Hope in the sun-
rise ; gloom of the evening, Life
at a close ;

Pleasure who flaunts on her wide down-
way with her flying robe and her
poison'd rose ;

Pain that has crawl'd from the corpse of
Pleasure, a worm which writhes
all day, and at night

Stirs up again in the heart of the sleeper,
and stings him back to the curse
of the light ;

Wealth with his wines and his wedded
harlots ; honest Poverty, bare to
the bone ;

Opulent Avarice, lean as Poverty ; Flat-
tery gilding the rift in a throne ;

Fame blowing out from her golden trum-
pet a jubilant challenge to Time
and to Fate ;

Slander, her shadow, sowing the nettle
on all the laurel'd graves of the
great ;

Love for the maiden, crown'd with mar-
riage, no regrets for aught that
has been,

Household happiness, gracious children,
debtless competence, golden mean ;

National hatreds of whole generations,
and pigmy spites of the village
spire ;

Vows that will last to the last death-
ruckle, and vows that are snapt in
a moment of fire ;

He that has lived for the lust of the
minute, and died in the doing it,
flesh without mind ;

He that has nail'd all flesh to the Cross,
till Self died out in the love of his
kind ;

Spring and Summer and Autumn and
Winter, and all these old revolu-
tions of earth ;

All new-old revolutions of Empire—
change of the tide—what is all of
it worth ?

What the philosophies, all the sciences,
poesy, varying voices of prayer,
All that is noblest, all that is basest, all
that is filthy with all that is fair ?

What is it all, if we all of us end but in
being our own corpse-coffins at
last ?

Swallow'd in Vastness, lost in Silence,
drown'd in the deeps of a meaning-
less Past ?

What but a murmur of gnats in the
gloom, or a moment's anger of
bees in their hive ?—

Peace, let it be ! for I loved him, and
love him for ever : the dead are
not dead but alive. 1885.

MERLIN AND THE GLEAM¹

O YOUNG Mariner,
You from the haven
Under the sea-cliff,
You that are watching
The gray Magician
With eyes of wonder,
I am Merlin,
And I am dying,
I am Merlin
Who follow the Gleam.

Mighty the Wizard
Who found me at sunrise
Sleeping and woke me
And learn'd me Magic !
Great the Master,
And sweet the Magic,
When over the valley,
In early summers,
Over the mountain,
On human faces,

¹ See the Life of Tennyson, II, 366

And all around me,
Moving to melody,
Floated the Gleam.

Once at the croak of a Raven who
crossed it,
A barbarous people,
Blind to the magic
And deaf to the melody,
Snarl'd at and cursed me.
A demon vexed me,
The light retreated,
The landskip darken'd,
The melody deaden'd,
The Master whisper'd
"Follow the Gleam."

Then to the melody
Over a wilderness
Gliding, and glancing at
Elf of the woodland,
Gnome of the cavern,
Griffin and Giant,
And dancing of Fairies
In desolate hollows,
And wraiths of the mountain,
And rolling of dragons
By warble of water,
Or cataract music
Of falling torrents,
Flitted the Gleam.

Down from the mountain
And over the level,
And streaming and shining on
Silent river,
Silvery willow,
Pasture and plowland,
Innocent maidens,
Garrulous children,
Homestead and harvest,
Reaper and gleaner,
And rough-ruddy faces
Of lowly labor,
Slided the Gleam—

Then, with a melody
Stronger and statelier,
Led me at length
To the city and palace
Of Arthur the King;
Touch'd at the golden
Cross of the churches,
Flash'd on the tournament,
Flicker'd and bicker'd
From helmet to helmet,
And last on the forehead
Of Arthur the blameless
Rested the Gleam.

Clouds and darkness
Closed upon Camelot;
Arthur had vanish'd
I knew not whither,
The king who loved me,
And cannot die;
For out of the darkness
Silent and slowly
The Gleam, that had waned to a wintry
glimmer
On icy fallow
And faded forest,
Drew to the valley
Named of the shadow,
And slowly brightening
Out of the glimmer,
And slowly moving again to a melody
Yearningly tender,
Fell on the shadow,
No longer a shadow,
But clothed with the Gleam.

And broader and brighter
The Gleam flying onward,
Wed to the melody,
Sang thro' the world;
And slower and fainter,
Old and weary,
But eager to follow,
I saw, whenever
In passing it glanced upon
Hamlet or city,
That under the Crosses
The dead man's garden,
The mortal hillock,
Would break into blossom;
And so to the land's
Last limit I came—
And can no longer,
But die rejoicing,
For thro' the Magic
Of Him the Mighty,
Who taught me in childhood,
There on the border
Of boundless Ocean,
And all but in Heaven
Hovers the Gleam.

Not of the sunlight,
Not of the moonlight,
Not of the starlight!
O young Mariner,
Down to the haven,
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel
And crowd your canvas,
And, ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the Gleam.

FAR—FAR—AWAY

(FOR MUSIC)

WHAT sight so lured him thro' the fields
he knew

As where earth's green stole into
heaven's own hue,
Far—far—away?

What sound was dearest in his native
dells?

The mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells
Far—far—away.

What vague world-whisper, mystic pain
or joy.

Thro' those three words would haunt
him when a boy,
Far—far—away?

A whisper from his dawn of life? a
breath

From some fair dawn beyond the doors
of death

Far—far—away?

Far, far, how far? from o'er the gates of
birth,

The faint horizons, all the bounds of
earth,

Far—far—away?

What charm in words, a charm no words
could give?

O dying words, can Music make you live
Far—far—away? 1889.

THE THROSTLE

"SUMMER is coming, summer is coming.

I know it, I know it, I know it.

Light again, leaf again, life again, love
again!"

Yes, my wild little Poet.

Sing the new year in under the blue.

Last year you sang it as gladly.

"New, new, new, new!" Is it then so
new

That you should carol so madly?

"Love again, song again, nest again,
young again,"

Never a prophet so crazy!

And hardly a daisy as yet, little friend,
See, there is hardly a daisy.

'Here again, here, here, here, happy
year!'"

O warble unchidden, unbidden!
Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,
And all the winters are hidden.

1889.

THE OAK

LIVE thy Life,
Young and old,
Like yon oak,
Bright in spring,
Living gold;

Summer-rich
Then; and then
Autumn-changed,
Soberer-hued
Gold again.

All his leaves
Fallen at length,
Look, he stands,
Trunk and bough,
Naked strength. 1889.

W CROSSING THE BAR¹

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the
bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the
boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of fare-
well,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time
and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar. 1889.

¹ "Crossing the Bar" was written in my father's
eighty-first year, on a day in October. . . .

"I said, 'That is the crown of your life's work,'
he answered, 'It came in a moment.' He ex-
plained the 'Pilot' as 'That Divine and Unseen
Who is always guiding us.'"

"A few days before his death he said to me;
'Mind you put *Crossing the Bar* at the end of all
editions of my poems.' " (*Life of Tennyson*, II.,
367.)

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

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ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE¹

I

I THOUGHT once how Theocritus had
sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-
for years,
Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:
And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my
tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy
years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had
flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I
was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did
move
Behind me, and drew me backward by
the hair;
And a voice said in mastery, while I
strove,—
“Guess now who holds thee?”—“Death,”
I said. But, there,
The silver answer rang,—“Not Death,
but Love.”

II

BUT only three in all God's universe
Have heard this word thou hast said,—
Himself, beside
Thee speaking, and me listening! and
replied
One of us . . . *that* was God, . . . and
laid the curse
So darkly on my eyelids, as to amerce
My sight from seeing thee,—that if I
had died,
The deathweights, placed there, would
have signified
Less absolute exclusion. “Nay” is
worse
From God than from all others, O my
friend!
Men could not part us with their worldly
jars,

Nor the seas change us, nor the tempests
bend;
Our hands would touch for all the
mountain-bars:
And, heaven being rolled between us at
the end,
We should but vow the faster for the
stars.

III²

UNLIKE are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies.
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink
thee, art
A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages from a hundred brighter
eyes
Than tears even can make mine, to play
thy part
Of chief musician. What hast *thou* to
do
With looking from the lattice-lights at
me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer, sing-
ing through
The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chrism is on thine head,—on mine,
the dew,—
And Death must dig the level where
these agree.

IV

THOU hast thy calling to some palace-
floor,
Most gracious singer of high poems!
where
The dancers will break footing, from the
care
Of watching up thy pregnant lips for
more.

¹ See the Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Brown-
ing, I, 316-317.

² See the Letters of Robert Browning and Eliza-
beth Barrett Barrett, I, 74-75. (May 24, 1845.)

And dost thou lift this house's latch too
 poor
 For hand of thine? and canst thou think
 and bear
 To let thy music drop here unaware
 In folds of golden fulness at my door?
 Look up and see the casement broken in,
 The bats and owlets builders in the roof!
 My cricket chirps against thy mandolin.
 Hush, call no echo up in further proof
 Of desolation! there's a voice within
 That weeps . . . as thou must sing . . .
 alone, aloof.

V

I LIFT my heavy heart up solemnly,
 As once Electra her sepulchral urn,
 And looking in thine eyes, I overturn
 The ashes at thy feet. Behold and see
 What a great heap of grief lay hid in
 me,
 And how the red wild sparkles dimly
 burn
 Through the ashen grayness. If thy
 foot in scorn
 Could tread them out to darkness utterly,
 It might be well perhaps. But if in-
 stead
 Thou wait beside me for the wind to
 blow
 The gray dust up, . . . those laurels on
 thine head,
 O my Belovèd, will not shield thee so,
 That none of all the fires shall scorch
 and shred
 The hair beneath. Stand farther off
 then! go.

VI¹

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall
 stand
 Henceforward in thy shadow. Never-
 more
 Alone upon the threshold of my door
 Of individual life, I shall command
 The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
 Serenely in the sunshine as before.
 Without the sense of that which I for-
 bore—
 Thy touch upon the palm. The widest
 land
 Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart
 in mine
 With pulses that beat double. What I
 do

¹ See the Letters of R. B. and E. B. B., I, 74-75,
 and 144.

And what I dream include thee, as the
 wine
 Must taste of its own grapes. And when
 I sue
 God for myself, He hears that name of
 thine,
 And sees within my eyes the tears of
 two.

VII

THE face of all the world is changed, I
 think,
 Since first I heard the footsteps of thy
 soul
 Move still, oh, still, beside me, as they
 stole
 Betwixt me and the dreadful outer brink
 Of obvious death, where I, who thought
 to sink,
 Was caught up into love, and taught
 the whole
 Of life in a new rhythm. The cup of
 dole
 God gave for baptism, I am fain to drink,
 And praise its sweetness, Sweet, with
 thee anear.
 The names of country, heaven, are
 changed away
 For where thou art or shalt be, there or
 here;
 And this . . . this lute and song . . .
 loved yesterday,
 (The singing angels know) are only dear
 Because thy name moves right in what
 they say.

VIII¹

WHAT can I give thee back, O liberal
 And princely giver, who hast brought
 the gold
 And purple of thine heart, unstained,
 untold,
 And laid them on the outside of the
 wall
 For such as I to take or leave withal,
 In unexpected largesse? am I cold,
 Ungrateful, that for these most manifold
 High gifts, I render nothing back at all?
 Not so; not cold,—but very poor instead.
 Ask God who knows. For frequent
 tears have run
 The colors from my life, and left so dead
 And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done
 To give the same as pillow to thy head.
 Go farther! let it serve to trample on.

¹ With this Sonnet and the next, compare the
 Letters, I, 183-5.

IX

CAN it be right to give what I can give?
To let thee sit beneath the fall of tears
As salt as mine, and hear the sighing
years

Re-sighing on my lips renunciative
Through those infrequent smiles which
fail to live

For all thy adjurations? O my fears,
That this can scarce be right! We are
not peers,

So to be lovers; and I own, and grieve,
That givers of such gifts as mine are,
must

Be counted with the ungenerous. Out,
alas!

I will not soil thy purple with my dust,
Nor breathe my poison on thy Venice-
glass,

Nor give thee any love—which were
unjust.

Beloved, I only love thee! let it pass.

X

YET, love, mere love, is beautiful indeed
And worthy of acceptance. Fire is
bright,

Let temple burn, or flax; an equal light
Leaps in the flame from cedar-plank or
weed:

And love is fire. And when I say at need
I love thee . . . mark! . . . I love thee—in
thy sight

I stand transfigured, glorified aright,
With conscience of the new rays that
proceed

Out of my face toward thine. There's
nothing low

In love, when love the lowest: meanest
creatures

Who love God, God accepts while loving
so.

And what I *feel*, across the inferior
features

Of what I *am*, doth flash itself, and show
How that great work of Love enhances
Nature's.

XI

AND therefore if to love can be desert,
I am not all unworthy. Cheeks as pale
As these you see, and trembling knees
that fail

To bear the burden of a heavy heart,—
This weary minstrel-life that once was
girt

To climb Aornus, and can scarce avail
To pipe now 'gainst the valley nightingale

A melancholy music,—why advert
To these things? O Beloved, it is plain
I am not of thy worth nor for thy place!
And yet, because I love thee, I obtain
From that same love this vindicating
grace,

To live on still in love, and yet in vain,—
To bless thee, yet renounce thee to thy
face.

XII

INDEED this very love which is my boast,
And which, when rising up from breast
to brow,

Doth crown me with a ruby large enow
To draw men's eyes and prove the inner
cost,—

This love even, all my worth, to the utter-
most,

I should not love withal, unless that thou
Hadst set me an example, shown me
how,

When first thine earnest eyes with mine
were crossed,

And love called love. And thus, I can-
not speak

Of love even, as a good thing of my own:
Thy soul hath snatched up mine all faint
and weak,

And placed it by thee on a golden
throne,—

And that I love (O soul, we must be
meek!)

Is by thee only, whom I love alone.

XIII

AND wilt thou have me fashion into
speech

The love I bear thee, finding words
enough,

And hold the torch out, while the winds
are rough,

Between our faces, to cast light on
each?—

I drop it at thy feet. I cannot teach
My hand to hold my spirit so far off
From myself—me—that I should bring
thee proof

In words, of love hid in me out of reach.
Nay, let the silence of my womanhood
Commend my woman-love to thy be-
lief,—

Seeing that I stand unwon, however
wooed,

And rend the garment of my life, in
brief,

By a most dauntless, voiceless fortitude,
Lest one touch of this heart convey its
grief.

XIV¹

If thou must love me, let it be for nought
 Except for love's sake only. Do not say
 "I love her for her smile—her look—her
 way
 Of speaking gently,—for a trick of
 thought
 That falls in well with mine, and certes
 brought
 A sense of pleasant ease on such a
 day"—
 For these things in themselves, Belovèd,
 may
 Be changed, or change for thee,—and
 love, so wrought,
 May be unwrought so. Neither love me
 for
 Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks
 dry,—
 A creature might forget to weep, who
 bore
 Thy comfort long, and lose thy love
 thereby!
 But love me for love's sake, that ever-
 more
 Thou mayst love on, through love's eter-
 nity.

XV

ACCUSE me not, beseech thee, that I
 wear
 Too calm and sad a face in front of
 thine;
 For we two look two ways, and can-
 not shine
 With the same sunlight on our brow
 and hair.
 On me thou lookest with no doubting
 care,
 As on a bee shut in a crystalline;
 Since sorrow hath shut me safe in love's
 divine,
 And to spread wing and fly in the outer
 air
 Were most impossible failure, if I strove
 To fail so. But I look on thee—on thee—
 Beholding, besides love, the end of love,
 Hearing oblivion beyond memory;
 As one who sits and gazes from above,
 Over the rivers to the bitter sea.

XVI²

AND yet, because thou overcomest so,
 Because thou art more noble and like a
 king,

¹ Compare the Letters, I, 256, 274-5, 506, 508.

² Compare the Letters, I, 545.

Thou canst prevail against my fears and
 fling
 Thy purple round me, till my heart
 shall grow
 Too close against thine heart henceforth
 to know
 How it shook when alone. Why, con-
 quering
 May prove as lordly and complete a
 thing
 In lifting upward, as in crushing low!
 And as a vanquished soldier yields his
 sword
 To one who lifts him from the bloody
 earth,
 Even so, Belovèd, I at last record,
 Here ends my strife. If *thou* invite me
 forth,
 I rise above abasement at the word.
 Make thy love larger to enlarge my
 worth.

XVII

My poet, thou canst touch on all the
 notes
 God set between His After and Before,
 And strike up and strike off the general
 roar
 Of the rushing worlds a melody that
 floats
 In a serene air purely. Antidotes
 Of medicated music, answering for
 Mankind's forlornest uses, thou canst
 pour
 From thence into their ears. God's will
 devotes
 Thine to such ends, and mine to wait on
 thine.
 How, Dearest, wilt thou have me for
 most use?
 A hope, to sing by gladly? or a fine
 Sad memory, with thy songs to inter-
 fuse?
 A shade, in which to sing—of palm or
 pine?
 A grave, on which to rest from singing?
 Choose.

XVIII

I NEVER gave a lock of hair away
 To a man, Dearest, except this to thee,
 Which now upon my fingers thought
 fully,
 I ring out to the full brown length and
 say
 "Take it." My day of youth went yes-
 terday:
 My hair no longer bounds to my foot's
 glee,

Nor plant I it from rose or myrtle-tree,
 As girls do, any more; it only may
 Now shade on two pale cheeks the mark
 of tears,
 Taught drooping from the head that
 hangs aside
 Through sorrow's trick. I thought the
 funeral-shears
 Would take this first, but love is justi-
 fied,—
 Take it thou, finding pure, from all those
 years,
 The kiss my mother left here when she
 died.

XIX

THE soul's Rialto hath its merchandise;
 I barter curl for curl upon that mart,
 And from my poet's forehead to my
 heart
 Receive this lock which outweighs ar-
 gosies,—
 As purple black, as erst to Pindar's eyes
 The dim purpureal tresses gloomed
 athwart
 The nine white Muse-brows. For this
 counterpart,
 The bay-crown's shade, Belovèd, I sur-
 mise,
 Still lingers on thy curl, it is so black!
 Thus, with a fillet of smooth-kissing
 breath,
 I tie the shadows safe from gliding back,
 And lay the gift where nothing hin-
 dereth;
 Here on my heart, as on thy brow, to
 lack
 No natural heat till mine grows cold in
 death.

XX¹

BELOVÈD, my Belovèd, when I think
 That thou wast in the world a year ago,
 What time I sat alone here in the snow
 And saw no footprint, heard the silence
 sink
 No moment at thy voice, but, link by
 link,
 Went counting all my chains as if that
 so
 They never could fall off at any blow
 Struck by thy possible hand,—why, thus
 I drink
 Of life's great cup of wonder! Wonder-
 ful,
 Never to feel thee thrill the day or night
 With personal act or speech,—nor ever
 cull

¹ Compare the Letters, I, 147.

Some prescience of thee with the blos-
 soms white
 Thou sawest growing! Atheists are as
 dull,
 Who cannot guess God's presence out of
 sight.

XXI¹

SAY over again, and yet once over again,
 That thou dost love me. Though the
 word repeated
 Should seem "a cuckoo-song," as thou
 dost treat it,
 Remember, never to the hill or plain,
 Valley and wood, without her cuckoo-
 strain
 Comes the fresh Spring in all her green
 completed.
 Belovèd, I, amid the darkness greeted
 By a doubtful spirit-voice, in that doubt's
 pain
 Cry, "Speak once more—thou lovest!"
 Who can fear
 Too many stars, though each in heaven
 shall roll,
 Too many flowers, though each shall
 crown the year?
 Say thou dost love me, love me, love me
 —toll
 The silver iterance!—only minding,
 Dear,
 To love me also in silence with thy soul.

XXII

WHEN our two souls stand up erect and
 strong,
 Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and
 nigher,
 Until the lengthening wings break into
 fire
 At either curvèd point,—what bitter
 wrong
 Can the earth do to us, that we should
 not long
 Be here contented? Think. In mount-
 ing higher,
 The angels would press on us and aspire
 To drop some golden orb of perfect song
 Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
 Rather on earth, Belovèd,—where the
 unfit
 Contrarious moods of men recoil away
 And isolate pure spirits, and permit
 A place to stand and love in for a day,
 With darkness and the death-hour round
 it.

¹ Compare the Letters, I, 336.

XXIII¹

Is it indeed so? If I lay here dead,
 Wouldst thou miss any life in losing
 mine?
 And would the sun for thee more coldly
 shine
 Because of grave-damps falling round
 my head?
 I marvelled, my Belovèd, when I read
 Thy thought so in the letter. I am
 thine—
 But . . . so much to thee? Can I pour
 thy wine
 While my hands tremble? Then my
 soul, instead
 Of dreams of death, resumes life's lower
 range.
 Then, love me, Love! look on me—
 breathe on me!
 As brighter ladies do not count it
 strange,
 For love, to give up acres and degree,
 I yield the grave for thy sake, and ex-
 change
 My near sweet view of Heaven, for earth
 with thee!

XXIV

LET the world's sharpness, like a clasp-
 ing knife,
 Shut in upon itself and do no harm
 In this close hand of Love, now soft and
 warm.
 And let us hear no sound of human
 strife
 After the click of the shutting. Life
 to life—
 I lean upon thee, Dear, without alarm,
 And feel as safe as guarded by a charm
 Against the stab of worldlings, who if
 rife
 Are weak to injure. Very whitely still
 The lilies of our lives may reassure
 Their blossoms from their roots, ac-
 cessible
 Alone to heavenly dews that drop not
 fewer,
 Growing straight, out of man's reach,
 on the hill. [us poor.
 God only, who made us rich, can make

XXV

A HEAVY heart, Belovèd, have I borne
 From year to year until I saw thy face,
 And sorrow after sorrow took the place
 Of all those natural joys as lightly worn

¹ Compare the Letters, I, 337, 345, 350.

As the stringed pearls, each lifted in its
 turn
 By a beating heart at dance-time.
 Hopes apace
 Were changed to long despairs, till God's
 own grace
 Could scarcely lift above the world for-
 lorn
 My heavy heart. Then *thou* didst bid
 me bring
 And let it drop adown thy calmly great
 Deep being! Fast it sinketh, as a thing
 Which its own nature doth precipitate,
 While thine doth close above it, media-
 ting
 Betwixt the stars and the unaccom-
 plished fate.

XXVI

I LIVED with visions for my company
 Instead of men and women, years ago,
 And found them gentle mates, nor
 thought to know
 A sweeter music than they played to
 me.
 But soon their trailing purple was not
 free
 Of this world's dust, their lutes did
 silent grow,
 And I myself grew faint and blind be-
 low
 Their vanishing eyes. Then THOU didst
 come—to be.
 Belovèd, what they seemed. Their
 shining fronts,
 Their songs, their splendors (better, yet
 the same,
 As river-water hallowed into fonts),
 Met in thee, and from out thee over-
 came
 My soul with satisfaction of all wants:
 Because God's gifts put man's best
 dreams to shame.

XXVII¹

My own Belovèd, who hast lifted me
 From this drear flat of earth where I
 was thrown,
 And, in betwixt the languid ringlets,
 blown
 A life-breath, till the forehead hope-
 fully
 Shines out again, as all the angels see,
 Before thy saving kiss! My own, my
 own,
 Who camest to me when the world was
 gone,

¹ Compare the Letters, I, 595.

And I who looked for only God, found
thee!
 I find thee; I am safe, and strong, and
 glad.
 As one who stands in dewless asphodel
 Looks backward on the tedious time he
 had
 In the upper life,—so I, with bosom-
 swell,
 Make witness, here, between the good
 and bad,
 That Love, as strong as Death, retrieves
 as well.

XXVIII¹

MY letters! all dead paper, mute and
 white!
 And yet they seem alive and quivering
 Against my tremulous hands which
 loose the string
 And let them drop down on my knee
 to-night.
 This said,—he wished to have me in his
 sight
 Once, as a friend: this fixed a day in
 spring
 To come and touch my hand . . . a
 simple thing,
 Yet I wept for it!—this, . . . the paper's
 light . . .
 Said, *Dear, I love thee*; and I sank and
 quailed
 As if God's future thundered on my
 past.
 This said, *I am thine*—and so its ink has
 paled
 With lying at my heart that beat too
 fast.
 And this . . . O Love, thy words have
 ill availed
 If, what this said, I dared repeat at last!

XXIX

I THINK of thee!—my thoughts do twine
 and bud
 About thee, as wild vines, about a tree,
 Put out broad leaves, and soon there's
 nought to see
 Except the straggling green which hides
 the wood.
 Yet, O my palm-tree, be it understood
 I will not have my thoughts instead of
 thee
 Who art dearer, better! Rather, in-
 stantly
 Renew thy presence; as a strong tree
 should,

¹ Compare the Letters, I, 6, 70, 365.

Rustle thy boughs and set thy trunk all
 bare,
 And let these bands of greenery which
 insphere thee
 Drop heavily down,—burst, shattered,
 everywhere!
 Because, in this deep joy to see and hear
 thee
 And breathe within thy shadow a new
 air,
 I do not think of thee—I am too near
 thee.

XXX

I SEE thine image through my tears to-
 night,
 And yet to-day I saw thee smiling.
 How
 Refer the cause?—Beloved, is it thou
 Or I, who makes me sad? The acolyte
 Amid the chanted joy and thankful rite
 May so fall flat, with pale insensate
 brow,
 On the altar-stair. I hear thy voice and
 vow,
 Perplexed, uncertain, since thou art
 out of sight,
 As he, in his swooning ears, the choir's
 Amen.
 Beloved, dost thou love? or did I see all
 The glory as I dreamed, and fainted
 when
 Too vehement light dilated my ideal,
 For my soul's eyes? Will that light
 come again,
 As now these tears come—falling hot
 and real?

XXXI

THOU comest! all is said without a word.
 I sit beneath thy looks as children do
 In the noon-sun, with souls that tremble
 through
 Their happy eyelids from an unaverred
 Yet prodigal inward joy. Behold, I
 erred
 In that last doubt! and yet I cannot rue
 The sin most, but the occasion—that we
 two
 Should for a moment stand unminis-
 tered
 By a mutual presence. Ah, keep near
 and close,
 Thou dovelike help! and, when my
 fears would rise,
 With thy broad heart serenely inter-
 pose:

Brood down with thy divine sufficiencies

These thoughts which tremble when
bereft of those,
Like callow birds left desert to the
skies.

XXXII

THE first time that the sun rose on thine
oath
To love me, I looked forward to the
moon
To slacken all those bonds which seemed
too soon
And quickly tied to make a lasting
troth.
Quick-loving hearts, I thought, may
quickly loathe;
And, looking on myself, I seemed not
one
For such man's love;—more like an out-
of-tune
Worn viol, a good singer would be
wroth
To spoil his song with, and which,
snatched in haste,
Is laid down at the first ill-sounding
note.
I did not wrong myself so, but I placed
A wrong on *thee*. For perfect strains
may float
'Neath master-hands, from instruments
defaced,—
And great souls, at one stroke, may do
and doat.

XXXIII

YES, call me by my pet-name! let me
hear
The name I used to run at, when a child,
From innocent play, and leave the cow-
slips piled,
To glance up in some face that proved
me dear
With the look of its eyes. I miss the
clear
Fond voices which, being drawn and
reconciled
Into the music of Heaven's undefiled,
Call me no longer. Silence on the bier,
While I call God—call God!—So let thy
mouth
Be heir to those who are now exanimate.
Gather the north flowers to complete the
south,
And catch the early love up in the late.
Yes, call me by that name,—and I, in
truth,
With the same heart, will answer and
not wait.

XXXIV

WITH the same heart, I said, I'll answer
thee
As those, when thou shalt call me by my
name—
Lo, the vain promise! is the same, the
same,
Perplexed and ruffled by life's strategy?
When called before, I told how hastily
I dropped my flowers or brake off from a
game,
To run and answer with the smile that
came
At play last moment, and went on with
me
Through my obedience. When I answer
now,
I drop a grave thought, break from soli-
tude;
Yet still my heart goes to thee—ponder
how—
Not as to a single good, but all my good!¹
Lay thy hand on it, best one, and allow
That no child's foot could run fast as
this blood.

XXXV

IF I leave all for thee, wilt thou ex-
change
And be all to me? Shall I never miss
Home-talk and blessing and the common
kiss
That comes to each in turn, nor count it
strange,
When I look up, to drop on a new range
Of walls and floors, another home than
this?
Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me
which is
Filled by dead eyes too tender to know
change?
That's hardest. If to conquer love, has
tried,
To conquer grief, tries more, as all
things prove;
For grief indeed is love and grief beside.
Alas, I have grieved so I am hard to love.
Yet love me—wilt thou? Open thine
heart wide,
And fold within the wet wings of thy
dove.

XXXVI

WHEN we met first and loved, I did not
build
Upon the event with marble. Could it
mean

¹ Compare the Letters, I, 361.

To last, a love set pendulous between
Sorrow and sorrow? Nay, I rather
thrilled,
Distrusting every light that seemed to
gild
The onward path, and feared to overlean
A finger even. And, though I have
grown serene
And strong since then, I think that God
has willed
A still renewable fear . . . O love, O
truth . . .
Lest these enclasped hands should never
hold,
This mutual kiss drop down between us
both
As an unowned thing, once the lips being
cold.
And Love, be false! if *he*, to keep one
oath,
Must lose one joy, by his life's star fore-
told.

XXXVII

PARDON, oh, pardon, that my soul should
make,
Of all that strong divineness which I
know
For thine and thee, an image only so
Formed of the sand, and fit to shift and
break.
It is that distant years which did not
take
Thy sovereignty, recoiling with a blow,
Have forced my swimming brain to un-
dergo
Their doubt and dread, and blindly to
forsake
Thy purity of likeness and distort
Thy worthiest love to a worthless coun-
terfeit :
As if a shipwrecked Pagan, safe in port,
His guardian sea-god to commemorate,
Should set a sculptured porpoise, gills a-
snort
And vibrant tail, within the temple-gate.

XXXVIII

FIRST time he kissed me, he but only
kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I
write ;
And ever since, it grew more clean and
white,
Slow to world-greetings, quick with its
" Oh, list,"
When the angels speak. A ring of
amethyst

I could not wear here, plainer to my
sight,
Than that first kiss. The second passed
in height
The first, and sought the forehead, and
half missed,
Half falling on the hair. O beyond meed !
That was the chrism of love, which
love's own crown,
With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.
The third upon my lips was folded down
In perfect, purple state ; since when, in-
deed,
I have been proud and said, " My love,
my own."

XXXIX

BECAUSE thou hast the power and own'st
the grace
To look through and behind this mask
of me
(Against which years have beat thus
blanchingly
With their rains), and behold my soul's
true face,
The dim and weary witness of life's
race,—
Because thou hast the faith and love to
see,
Through that same soul's distracting
lethargy,
The patient angel waiting for a place
In the new Heavens,—because nor sin
nor woe,
Nor God's infliction, nor death's neigh-
borhood,
Nor all which others viewing, turn to
go,
Nor all which makes me tired of all, self-
viewed,—
Nothing repels thee, . . . Dearest, teach
me so
To pour out gratitude, as thou dost,
good !

XL

OH, yes ! they love through all this world
of ours !
I will not gainsay love, called love
forsooth.
I have heard love talked in my early
youth,
And since, not so long back but that the
flowers
Then gathered, smell still. Mussulmans
and Giaours
Throw kerchiefs at a smile, and have no
ruth

For any weeping. Polypheme's white
tooth
Slips on the nut if, after frequent
showers,
The shell is over-smooth,—and not so
much
Will turn the thing called love, aside to
hate,
Or else to oblivion. But thou art not
such
A lover, my Belovèd! thou canst wait
Through sorrow and sickness, to bring
souls to touch,
And think it soon when others cry "Too
late."

XLI

I THANK all who have loved me in their
hearts,
With thanks and love from mine. Deep
thanks to all
Who paused a little near the prison-wall
To hear my music in its louder parts
Ere they went onward, each one to the
mart's
Or temple's occupation, beyond call.
But thou, who, in my voice's sink and
fall
When the sob took it, thy divinest Art's
Own instrument didst drop down at thy
foot
To hearken what I said between my
tears, . . .
Instruct me how to thank thee! Oh, to
shoot
My soul's full meaning into future years,
That *they* should lend it utterance, and
salute
Love that endures, from Life that dis-
appears!

XLII

"*My future will not copy fair my
past*"—¹
I wrote that once; and thinking at my
side
My ministering life-angel justified
The word by his appealing look upcast
To the white throne of God, I turned at
last,
And there, instead, saw thee, not unallied
To angels in thy soul! Then I, long
tried
By natural ills, received the comfort fast,
While budding, at thy sight, my pilgrim's
staff

¹ A sonnet of Mrs. Browning's, of 1844, begins with this line. See also the Letters, I, 231.

Gave out green leaves with morning
dews impearled.
I seek no copy now of life's first half:
Leave here the pages with long musing
curled,
And write me new my future's epigraph,
New angel mine, unhopèd for in the
world!

XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the
ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and
height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of
sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for
Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from
Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's
faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with
the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God
choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

XLIV

BEOVÈD, thou hast brought me many
flowers
Plucked in the garden, all the summer
through
And winter, and it seemed as if they grew
In this close room, nor missed the sun
and showers.
So, in the like name of that love of ours,
Take back these thoughts which here un-
folded too,
And which on warm and cold days I
withdrew
From my heart's ground. Indeed, those
beds and bowers
Be overgrown with bitter weeds and rue,
And wait thy weeding; yet here's eglan-
tine,
Here's ivy!—take them, as I used to do
Thy flowers, and keep them where they
shall not pine.
Instruct thine eyes to keep their colors
true,
And tell thy soul their roots are left in
mine.
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ROBERT BROWNING

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(The above books are for the most part more elementary than could be needed to-day by any person of ordinary intelligence. Some of them, however, especially that of Berdoe, and in a less degree those of Corson, G. W. Cooke, and Mrs. Orr, contain much valuable information not elsewhere so easily obtainable.)

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ROBERT BROWNING

SONGS FROM PARACELSUS

HEAP cassia, sandal-buds and stripes
Of labdanum, and aloe-balls,
Smeared with dull nard an Indian wipes
From out her hair : such balsam falls
Down sea-side mountain pedestals,
From tree-tops where tired winds are
fain,
Spent with the vast and howling main,
To treasure half their island-gain.

And strew faint sweetness from some
old

Egyptian's fine worm-eaten shroud
Which breaks to dust when once un-
rolled ;

Or shredded perfume, like a cloud
From closet long to quiet vowed,
With moth and dropping arras hung,
Mouldering her lute and books among,
As when a queen, long dead, was young.

Over the sea our galleys went,
With cleaving prows in order brave
To a speeding wind and a bounding
wave,

A gallant armament :
Each bark built out of a forest-tree
Left leafy and rough as first it grew.
And nailed all over the gaping sides,
Within and without, with black bull-
hides,

Seethed in fat and suppld in flame,
To bear the playful billows' game :
So, each good ship was rude to see,
Rude and bare to the outward view,
But each upbore a stately tent
Where cedar pales in scented row
Kept out the flakes of the dancing brine,
And an awning drooped the mast below,
In fold on fold of the purple fine,

That neither noontide nor starshine
Nor moonlight cold which maketh maa
Might pierce the regal tenement.
When the sun dawned, oh, gay and glad
We set the sail and plied the oar ;
But when the night-wind blew like
breath,

For joy of one day's voyage more,
We sang together on the wide sea,
Like men at peace on a peaceful shore ;
Each sail was loosed to the wind so free,
Each helm made sure by the twilight
star,

And in a sleep as calm as death,
We, the voyagers from afar,
Lay stretched along, each weary crew
In a circle round its wondrous tent
Whence gleamed soft light and curled
rich scent,

And with light and perfume, music
too :
So the stars wheeled round, and the
darkness past,
And at morn we started beside the mast,
And still each ship was sailing fast.

Now, one morn, land appeared—a speck
Dim trembling betwixt sea and sky :
“ Avoid it,” cried our pilot, “ check
The shout, restrain the eager eye ! ”
But the heaving sea was black behind
For many a night and many a day,
And land, though but a rock, drew
nigh ;

So, we broke the cedar pales away,
Let the purple awning flap in the wind,
And a statue bright was on every
deck !

We shouted, every man of us,
And steered right into the harbor thus,
With pomp and pæan glorious.

A hundred shapes of lucid stone !
All day we built its shrine for each,

A shrine of rock for every one,
Nor paused till in the westerling sun
We sat together on the beach
To sing because our task was done,
When lo! what shouts and merry songs!
What laughter all the distance stirs!
A loaded raft with happy throngs
Of gentle islanders!

"Our isles are just at hand," they
cried,

"Like cloudlets faint in even sleep-
ing.

Our temple-gates are opened wide,
Our olive-groves thick shade are keep-
ing

For these majestic forms"—they cried.
Oh, then we awoke with sudden start
From our deep dream, and knew, too
late,

How bare the rock, how desolate,
Which had received our precious
freight

Yet we called out—"Depart!
Our gifts, once given, must here abide.

Our work is done; we have no heart
To mar our work,"—we cried. 1835.

PORPHYRIA'S LOVER¹

THE rain set early in to-night,
The sullen wind was soon awake,
It tore the elm-tops down for spite,
And did its worst to vex the lake:

I listened with heart fit to break.
When glided in Porphyria; straight
She shut the cold out and the storm,
And kneeled and made the cheerless
grate

Blaze up, and all the cottage warm;
Which done, she rose, and from her
form

Withdrew the dripping cloak and
shawl,

And laid her soiled gloves by, untied
Her hat and let the damp hair fall,

And, last, she sat down by my side
And called me. When no voice re-
plied.

She put my arm about her waist,
And made her smooth white shoulder
bare

And all her yellow hair displaced,
And, stooping, made my cheek lie
there,

And spread, o'er all, her yellow hair,
Murmuring how she loved me—she
Too weak, for all her heart's en-
deavor,

To set its struggling passion free
From pride, and vainer ties dissever,
And give herself to me forever.
But passion sometimes would prevail,
Nor could to-night's gay feast re-
strain

A sudden thought of one so pale
For love of her, and all in vain:
So, she was come through wind and
rain.

Be sure I looked up at her eyes
Happy and proud; at last I knew
Porphyria worshipped me; surprise
Made my heart swell, and still it
grew

While I debated what to do.
That moment she was mine, mine,
fair,

Perfectly pure and good: I found
A thing to do, and all her hair
In one long yellow string I wound
Three times her little throat around,
And strangled her. No pain felt she;
I am quite sure she felt no pain.

As a shut bud that holds a bee,
I warily oped her lids; again
Laughed the blue eyes without a stain.
And I untightened next the tress
About her neck; her cheek once
more

Blushed bright beneath my burning
kiss:

I propped her head up as before,
Only, this time my shoulder bore
Her head, which droops upon it still:

The smiling rosy little head,
So glad it has its utmost will,

That all it scorned at once is fled,
And I, its love, am gained instead!
Porphyria's love: she guessed not how

Her darling one wish would be heard,
And thus we sit together now,

And all night long we have not
stirred,
And yet God has not said a word!

1836.

¹ This is the earliest of Browning's great series of dramatic poems in lyric form. It was first printed in the *Monthly Repository*, 1836; with *Johannes Agricola in Meditation*; was then included in the *Dramatic Lyrics* (1842); and is now classed among the *Dramatic Romances*.

Most of Browning's poems are simply dramatic monologues, without stage directions, often without even the name of the speaker. The reader must remember that it is not Browning who is speaking or telling the story; and must first notice *who is speaking*, and *under what circumstances*. Once this is done, most of the alleged "obscurity" of Browning will be found to have disappeared forever.

PIPPA PASSES

A DRAMA

PERSONS

PIPPA
OTTIMA
SEBALD
Foreign Students
GOTTLIEB
SCHRAMM

JULES
PHENE
Austrian Police
BLUPHOCKS
LUIGI and his mother
Poor Girls
MONSIGNOR and his attendants

INTRODUCTION

NEW YEAR'S DAY AT ASOLO IN THE TRE-
VISAN

A large mean airy chamber. A girl, PIPPA, from the silk-mills, springing out of bed.

DAY !

Faster and more fast,
O'er night's brim, day boils at last :
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's
brim

Where spurting and suppressed it lay,
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid gray
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away ;
But forth one wavelet, then another,
curled,

Till the whole sunrise, not to be sup-
pressed,
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then
overflowed the world.

Oh Day, if I squander a wavelet of thee,
A mite of my twelve-hours' treasure,
The least of thy gazes or glances,
(Be they grants thou art bound to or gifts
above measure)

One of thy choices or one of thy chances,
(Be they tasks God imposed thee or
freaks at thy pleasure)

—My Day, if I squander such labor or
leisure,
Then shame fall on Asolo, mischief on
me !

Thy long blue solemn hours serenely
flowing,

Whence earth, we feel, gets steady help
and good—

Thy fitful sunshine-minutes, coming,
going,

As if earth turned from work in game-
some mood—

All shall be mine ! But thou must treat
me not

As prosperous ones are treated, those
who live

At hand here, and enjoy the higher lot,
In readiness to take what thou wilt give,
And free to let alone what thou re-
fusest ;

For, Day, my holiday, if thou ill-usest
Me, who am only Pippa,—old-year's sor-
row,

Cast off last night, will come again to-
morrow :

Whereas, if thou prove gentle, I shall
borrow

Sufficient strength of thee for new-year's
sorrow.

All other men and women that this
earth

Belongs to, who all days alike possess,
Make general plenty cure particular
dearth,

Get more joy one way, if another, less :
Thou art my single day, God lends to
heaven

What were all earth else, with a feel of
heaven,—

Sole light that helps me through the
year, thy sun's !

Try now ! Take Asolo's Four Happiest
Ones—

And let thy morning rain on that superb
Great haughty Ottima ; can rain disturb
Her Sebald's homage ? All the while
thy rain

Beats fiercest on her shrub-house win-
dow pane

He will but press the closer, breathe
more warm

Against her cheek ; how should she
mind the storm ?

And, morning past, if mid-day shed a
gloom

O'er Jules and Phene,—what care bride
and groom

Save for their dear selves ? 'T is their
marriage day ;

And while they leave church and go
home their way,

Hand clasping hand, within each breast
would be

Sunbeams and pleasant weather spite of
thee.

Then, for another trial, obscure thy eve
With mist,—will Luigi and his mother
grieve—

The lady and her child, unmatched, for-
sooth,

She in her age, as Luigi in his youth,
For true content? The cheerful town,
warm, close

And safe, the sooner that thou art mo-
rose,

Receives them. And yet once again,
outbreak

In storm at night on Monsignor, they
make

Such stir about,—whom they expect
from Rome

To visit Asolo, his brothers' home,
And say here masses proper to release
A soul from pain,—what storm dares
hurt his peace?

Calm would he pray, with his own
thoughts to ward

Thy thunder off, nor want the angels'
guard.

But Pippa—just one such mischance
would spoil

Her day that lightens the next twelve-
month's toil

At wearisome silk-winding, coil on coil!

And here I let time slip for naught!
Aha, you foolhardy sunbeam, caught
With a single splash from my ewer!
You that would mock the best pursuer,
Was my basin over-deep?

One splash of water ruins you asleep,
And up, up, fleet your brilliant bits
Wheeling and counterwheeling,
Reeling, broken beyond healing:

Now grow together on the ceiling!
That will task your wits.

Whoever it was quenched fire first,
hoped to see

Morsel after morsel flee
As merrily, as giddily . . .

Meantime, what lights my sunbeam on,
Where settles by degrees the radiant
cripple?

Oh, is it surely blown, my martagon?
New-blown and ruddy as St. Agnes'

nipple,
Plump as the flesh-bunch on some Turk
bird's poll!

Be sure if corals, branching 'neath the
ripple [roll

Of ocean, bud there,—fairies watch un-

Such turban-flowers; I say, such lamps
disperse

Thick red flame through that dusk green
universe!

I am queen of thee, floweret!
And each fleshy blossom

Preserve I not—(safer
Than leaves that embower it,
Or shells that embosom)

—From weevil and chafer?
Laugh through my pane then; solicit

the bee;

Gibe him, be sure; and, in midst of thy
glee,

Love thy queen, worship me!

—Worship whom else? For am I not,
this day,

Whate'er I please? What shall I please
to-day?

My morn, noon, eve and night—how
spend my day?

To-morrow I must be Pippa who winds
silk,

The whole year round, to earn just bread
and milk:

But, this one day, I have leave to go,
And play out my fancy's fullest games;
I may fancy all day—and it shall be so—
That I taste of the pleasures, am called
by the names

Of the Happiest Four in our Asolo!

See! Up the hillside yonder, through the
morning,

Some one shall love me, as the world
calls love:

I am no less than Ottima, take warning!
The gardens, and the great stone house

above,
And other house for shrubs, all glass in
front,

Are mine; where Sebald steals, as he is
wont,

To court me, while old Luca yet reposes;
And therefore, till the shrub-house door

uncloses,
I . . . what now?—give abundant cause
for prate

About me—Ottima, I mean—of late,
Too bold, too confident she'll still face

down
The spitefullest of talkers in our town.

How we talk in the little town below!

But love, love, love—there's better
love, I know!

This foolish love was only day's first
offer;

I choose my next love to defy the scoffer;

For do not our Bride and Bridegroom
sally

Out of Possagno church at noon?
Their house looks over Orcana valley:
Why should not I be the bride as soon
As Ottima? For I saw, beside,
Arrive last night that little bride—
Saw, if you call it seeing her, one flash
Of the pale snow-pure cheek and black
bright tresses,

Blacker than all except the black eye-
lash;

I wonder she contrives those lids no
dresses!

—So strict was she, the veil
Should cover close her pale

Pure cheeks—a bride to look at and
scarce touch,

Scarce touch, remember, Jules! For are
not such

Used to be tended, flower-like, every
feature,

As if one's breath would fray the lily of
a creature?

A soft and easy life these ladies lead:
Whiteness in us were wonderful in-
deed.

Oh, save that brow its virgin dimness,
Keep that foot its lady primness,
Let those ankles never swerve
From their exquisite reserve,
Yet have to trip along the streets like me,
All but naked to the knee!
How will she ever grant her Jules a bliss
So startling as her real first infant kiss?
Oh, no—not envy, this!

—Not envy, sure!—for if you gave me
Leave to take or to refuse,

In earnest, do you think I'd choose
That sort of new love to enslave me?

Mine should have lapped me round from
the beginning;

As little fear of losing it as winning:
Lovers grow cold, men learn to hate

their wives,

And only parents' love can last our lives.
At eve the Son and Mother, gentle pair,

Commune inside our turret: what pre-
vents

My being Luigi? While that mossy lair
Of lizards through the winter-time is
stirred

With each to each imparting sweet in-
tents

For this new-year, as brooding bird to
bird—

(For I observe of late, the evening walk
Of Luigi and his mother, always ends

Inside our ruined turret, where they talk,
Calmer than lovers, yet more kind than
friends)

—Let me be cared about, kept out of
harm,

And schemed for, safe in love as with
a charm;

Let me be Luigi! If I only knew
What was my mother's face—my father,

too!

Nay, if you come to that, best love of all
Is God's; then why not have God's love
befall

Myself as, in the palace by the Dome,
Monsignor?—who to-night will bless the

home
Of his dead brother; and God bless in
turn

That heart which beats, those eyes which
mildly burn

With love for all men! I, to-night at
least,

Would be that holy and beloved priest.

Now wait!—even I already seem to
share

In God's love: what does New-year's
hymn declare?

What other meaning do these verses
bear?

All service ranks the same with God:

If now, as formerly he trod

Paradise, his presence fills

Our earth, each only as God wills

*Can work—God's puppets, best and
worst,*

Are we; there is no last nor first.

*Say not "a small event!" Why
"small?"*

Costs it more pain that this, ye call

*A "great event," should come to
pass,*

*Than that? Untwine me from the
mass*

*Of deeds which make up life, one deed
Power shall fall short in or exceed!*

And more of it, and more of it!—oh yes—
I will pass each, and see their happiness,

And envy none—being just as great, no
doubt,

Useful to men, and dear to God as they!
A pretty thing to care about

So mightily, this single holiday!

But let the sun shine! Wherefore re-
pine?

—With thee to lead me, O Day of mine,

Down the grass path gray with dew,
Under the pine-wood, blind with boughs,
Where the swallow never flew
Nor yet cicala dared carouse—
No, dared carouse!

[*She enters the street.*]

I. MORNING

*Up the Hillside, inside the Shrub-house. LUCA'S
WIFE, OTTIMA, and her Paramour, the German
SEBALD.*

*Sebald. [sings] Let the watching
lids wink!*

*Day's ablaze with eyes, think!
Deep into the night, drink!*

Ottima. Night? Such may be your
Rhineland nights, perhaps;

But this blood-red beam through the
shutter's chink

—We call such light, the morning: let
us see!

Mind how you grope your way, though!
How these tall

Naked geraniums straggle! Push the
lattice

Behind that frame!—Nay, do I bid you?
—Sebald,

It shakes the dust down on me! Why,
of course

The slide-bolt catches. Well, are you
content,

Or must I find you something else to
spoil?

Kiss and be friends, my Sebald! Is 't
full morning?

Oh, don't speak then!

Seb. Ay, thus it used to be!
Ever your house was, I remember, shut
till mid-day; I observed that, as I
strolled

On mornings through the vale here;
country girls

Were noisy, washing garments in the
brook,

Hinds drove the slow white oxen up the
hills:

But no, your house was mute, would
ope no eye!

And wisely: you were plotting one thing
there,

Nature, another outside. I looked up—
Rough white wood shutters, rusty iron

bars,
Silent as death, blind in a flood of light.

Oh, I remember!—and the peasants
laughed

And said, "The old man sleeps with the
young wife."

This house was his, this chair, this win-
dow—his.

Otti. Ah, the clear morning! I can
see Saint Mark's;

That black streak is the belfry. Stop:
Vicenza

Should lie . . . there's Padua, plain
enough, that blue!

Look o'er my shoulder, follow my finger!
Seb. Morning?

It seems to me a night with a sun added.
Where's dew, where's freshness? That

bruised plant, I bruised
In getting through the lattice yestereve,

Droops as it did. See, here's my elbow's
mark

I' the dust o' the sill.

Otti. Oh, shut the lattice, pray!
Seb. Let me lean out. I cannot scent

blood here,
Foul as the morn may be.

There, shut the world out!
How do you feel now, Ottima? There,

curse
The world and all outside! Let us throw

off
This mask: how do you bear yourself?

Let's out
With all of it!

Otti. Best never speak of it.
Seb. Best speak again and yet again

of it,
Till words cease to be more than words.

"His blood,"
For instance—let those two words mean,

"His blood"
And nothing more. Notice, I'll say

them now, "His blood."
Otti. Assuredly if I repented

The deed—
Seb. Repent? Who should repent,

or why?
What puts that in your head? Did I

once say
That I repented?

Otti. No; I said the deed . . .
Seb. "The deed" and "the event"—

just now it was
"Our passion's fruit"—the devil take

such cant!
Say, once and always, Luca was a wittol,

I am his cut-throat, you are . . .
Otti. Here's the wine;

I brought it when we left the house
above,

And glasses too—wine of both sorts.
Black? White then?

Seb. But am not I his cut-throat?
What are you?

Otti. There trudges on his business
from the Duomo
Benet the Capuchin, with his brown
hood
And bare feet; always in one place at
church,
Close under the stone wall by the south
entry.
I used to take him for a brown cold
piece
Of the wall's self, as out of it he rose
To let me pass—at first, I say, I used:
Now, so has that dumb figure fastened
on me,
I rather should account the plastered
wall
A piece of him, so chilly does it strike.
This, Sebald?
Seb. No, the white wine—the white
wine!
Well, Ottima, I promised no new year
Should rise on us the ancient shameful
way;
Nor does it rise. Pour on! To your
black eyes!
Do you remember last damned New
Year's day?
Otti. You brought those foreign
prints. We looked at them
Over the wine and fruit. I had to
scheme
To get him from the fire. Nothing but
saying
His own set wants the proof-mark,
roused him up
To hunt them out.
Seb. 'Faith, he is not alive
To fondle you before my face.
Otti. Do you
Fondle me then! Who means to take
your life
For that, my Sebald?
Seb. Hark you, Ottima!
One thing to guard against. We'll not
make much
One of the other—that is, not make
more
Parade of warmth, childish officious
coil,
Than yesterday: as if, sweet, I supposed
Proof upon proof were needed now, now
first,
To show I love you—yes, still love you—
love you
In spite of Luca and what's come to him
—Sure sign we had him ever in our
thoughts,
White sneering old reproachful face and
all!

We'll even quarrel, love, at times, as if
We still could lose each other, were not
tied

By this: conceive you?

Otti. Love!

Seb. Not tied so sure!

Because though I was wrought upon,
have struck

His insolence back into him—am I

So surely yours?—therefore forever
yours?

Otti. Love, to be wise, (one counsel
pays another,)

Should we have—months ago, when first
we loved,

For instance that May morning we two
stole

Under the green ascent of sycamores—
If we had come upon a thing like that
Suddenly . . .

Seb. "A thing"—there again—"a
thing!"

Otti. Then, Venus' body, had we
come upon

My husband Luca Gaddi's murdered
corpse

Within there, at his couch-foot, covered
close—

Would you have pored upon it? Why
persist

In poring now upon it? For 't is here
As much as there in the deserted house:
You cannot rid your eyes of it. For me,
Now he is dead I hate him worse: I
hate . . .

Dare you stay here? I would go back
and hold

His two dead hands, and say, "I hate
you worse,

Luca, than" . . .

Seb. Off, off—take your hands off
mine,

'T is the hot evening—off! oh, morning
is it?

Otti. There's one thing must be done;
you know what thing.

Come in and help to carry. We may
sleep [night.

Anywhere in the whole wide house to
Seb. What would come, think you, if
we let him lie

Just as he is? Let him lie there until
The angels take him! He is turned by
this

Off from his face beside, as you will see.
Otti. This dusty pane might serve for
looking-glass.

Three, four—four gray hairs! Is it so
you said

A plait of hair should wave across my neck ?

No—this way.

Seb. Ottima, I would give your neck,
Each splendid shoulder, both those
breasts of yours,
That this were undone! Killing! Kill
the world,

So Luca lives again!—ay, lives to sputter
His fulsome dotage on you—yes, and
feign

Surprise that I return at eve to sup,
When all the morning I was loitering
here—

Bid me dispatch my business and begone.
I would . . .

Otti. See!

Seb. No, I'll finish. Do you think
I fear to speak the bare truth once for
all?

All we have talked of, is, at bottom, fine
To suffer; there's a recompense in guilt;
One must be venturesome and fortunate:
What is one young for, else? In age
we'll sigh

O'er the wild reckless wicked days flown
over;

Still, we have lived: the vice was in its
place.

But to have eaten Luca's bread, have
worn

His clothes, have felt his money swell
my purse—

Do lovers in romances sin that way?
Why, I was starving when I used to call
And teach you music, starving while
you plucked me

These flowers to smell!

Otti. My poor lost friend!

Seb. He gave me
Life, nothing less: what if he did re-
proach

My perfidy, and threaten, and do more—
Had he no right? What was to wonder
at?

He sat by us at table quietly:
Why must you lean across till our cheeks
touched?

Could he do less than make pretence to
strike?

'Tis not the crime's sake—I'd commit
ten crimes

Greater, to have this crime wiped out,
undone!

And you—O how feel you? Feel you
for me!

Otti. Well then, I love you better
now than ever, [you]—

And best (look at me while I speak to

Best for the crime; nor do I grieve, in
truth,

This mask, this simulated ignorance,
This affectation of simplicity,
Falls off our crime; this naked crime of
ours

May not now be looked over: look it
down!

Great? let it be great; but the joys it
brought,

Pay they or no its price? Come; they
or it!

Speak not! The past, would you give
up the past

Such as it is, pleasure and crime to-
gether?

Give up that noon I owned my love for
you?

The garden's silence: even the single
bee

Persisting in his toil, suddenly stopped,
And where he hid you only could sur-
mise

By some campanula chalice set a-swing.
Who stammered—"Yes, I love you?"

Seb. And I drew
Back; put far back your face with both
my hands

Lest you should grow too full of me—
your face

So seemed athirst for my whole soul and
body!

Otti. And when I ventured to receive
you here,

Made you steal hither in the mornings—
Seb. When

I used to look up 'neath the shrub-house
here,

Till the red fire on its glazed windows
spread

To a yellow haze?

Otti. Ah—my sign was, the sun
Inflamed the sere side of yon chestnut-
tree

Nipped by the first frost.

Seb. You would always laugh
At my wet boots: I had to stride through
grass

Over my ankles.

Otti. Then our crowning night!

Seb. The July night?

Otti. The day of it too, Sebald!
When heaven's pillars seemed o'erbowed
with heat,

Its black-blue canopy suffered descend
Close on us both, to weigh down each to
each,

And smother up all life except our life.

So lay we till the storm came.

Seb. How it came !

Otti. Buried in woods we lay, you
recollect ;
Swift ran the searching tempest over-
head ;
And ever and anon some bright white
shaft
Burned through the pine-tree roof, here
burned and there,
As if God's messenger through the close
wood screen
Plunged and replunged his weapon at a
venture,

Feeling for guilty thee and me : then
broke
The thunder like a whole sea overhead—

Seb. Yes !

Otti.—While I stretched myself upon
you, hands
To hands, my mouth to your hot mouth,
and shook
All my locks loose, and covered you with
them—

You, Sebald, the same you !

Seb. Slower, Ottima !

Otti. And as we lay—

Seb. Less vehemently ! Love me !
Forgive me ! Take not words, mere
words, to heart !
Your breath is worse than wine. Breathe
slow, speak slow !

Do not lean on me !

Otti. Sebald, as we lay,
Rising and falling only with our pants,
Who said, " Let death come now ! ' T is
right to die !

Right to be punished ! Naught completes
such bliss

But woe ! " Who said that ?

Seb. How did we ever rise ?
Was 't that we slept ? Why did it end ?

Otti. I felt you
Taper into a point the ruffled ends
Of my loose locks 'twixt both your
humid lips,

My hair is fallen now : knot it again !

Seb. I kiss you now, dear Ottima,
now and now !

This way ? Will you forgive me—be
once more

My great queen ?

Otti. Bind it thrice about my brow ;
Crown me your queen, your spirit's
arbitress,

Magnificent in sin. Say that !

Seb. I crown you
My great white queen, my spirit's arbi-
tress,
Magnificent . . .

[From without is heard the voice of PIPPA
singing—

*The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn ;
Morning's at seven ;
The hillside's dew-pearled ;
The lark's on the wing ;
The snail's on the thorn :
God's in his heaven—
All's right with the world !*

[PIPPA passes.

Seb. God's in his heaven ! Do you hear
that ? Who spoke ?

You, you spoke !

Otti. Oh—that little ragged girl !
She must have rested on the step : we
give them

But this one holiday the whole year
round

Did you ever see our silk-mills—their
inside ?

There are ten silk-mills now belong to
you.

She stoops to pick my double hearts—
ease . . . Sh !

She does not hear : call you out louder !
Seb. Leave me !

Go, get your clothes on—dress those
shoulders !

Otti. Sebald ?

Seb. Wipe off that paint ! I hate you.

Otti. Miserable !

Seb. My God, and she is emptied of it
now !

Outright now !—how miraculously gone
All of the grace—had she not strange
grace once ?

Why, the blank cheek hangs listless
as it likes,

No purpose holds the features up to-
gether,

Only the cloven brow and puckered chin
Stay in their places : and the very hair,
That seemed to have a sort of life in it,
Drops, a dead web !

Otti. Speak to me—not of me !

Seb.—That round great full-orbed face,
where not an angle

Broke the delicious indolence—all
broken !

Otti. To me—not of me ! Ungrateful,
perjured cheat !

A coward too : but ingrate's worse than
all !

Beggar—my slave—a fawning, cringing
lie !

Leave me ! Betray me ! I can see your
drift !

A lie that walks and eats and drinks !

Seb. My God !
Those morbid olive faultless shoulder-
blades—

I should have known there was no blood
beneath !

Otti. You hate me then ? You hate
me then ?

Seb. To think

She would succeed in her absurd attempt,
And fascinate by sinning, show herself
Superior—guilt from its excess superior
To innocence ! That little peasant's voice
Has righted all again. Though I be lost,
I know which is the better, never fear,
Of vice or virtue, purity or lust,
Nature or trick ! I see what I have done,
Entirely now ! Oh I am proud to feel
Such torments—let the world take credit
thence—

I, having done my deed, pay too its
price !

I hate, hate—curse you ! God's in his
heaven !

Otti. —Me !

Me ! no, no, Sebald, not yourself—kill
me !

Mine is the whole crime. Do but kill
me—then

Yourself—then—presently—first hear
me speak !

I always meant to kill myself—wait,
you !

Lean on my breast—not as a breast;
don't love me

The more because you lean on me, my
own

Heart's Sebald ! There, there, both
deaths presently !

Seb. My brain is drowned now—quite
drowned : all I feel

Is . . . is, at swift-recurring intervals,
A hurry-down within me, as of waters
Loosened to smother up some ghastly
pit :

There they go—whirls from a black
fiery sea !

Otti. Not me—to him, O God, be
merciful !

*Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing from the
hillside to Orkana. Foreign Students of paint-
ing and sculpture, from Venice, assembled
opposite the house of JULES, a young French
statuary, at Passagno.*

1st Student. Attention ! My own post is
beneath this window, but the pomegranate
clump yonder will hide three or four of you
with a little squeezing, and Schramm and
his pipe must lie flat in the balcony. Four,

five—who's a left, ulter ? We want every-
body, for Jules must not be suffered to
hurt his bride when 'he jest's found out.

2d Stud. Al here ! Only our poet's
away—never having much meant to be
present, moonstrike him ! The airs of that
fellow, that Giovacchino ! He was in violent
love with himself, and had a fair prospect
of thriving in his suit, so unmolested
was it,—when suddenly a woman falls in
love with him, too ; and out of pure jeal-
ousy he takes himself off to Trieste, im-
mortal poem and all : whereto is this
prophetic epitaph appended already, as
Bluphocks assures me,—“*Here a mam-
moth-poem lies, Fouled to death by but
terflies.*” His own fault, the simpleton !
Instead of cramp couplets, each like a knife
in your entrails, he should write, says
Bluphocks, both classically and intelligibly.
—*Æsculapius, an Epic. Catalogue of the
drugs: Hebe's Plaister—One strip Cools
your lip. Phœbus' emulsion—One bottle
Clears your throat. Mercury's bolus—
One box Cures . . .*

3d Stud. Subside, my fine fellow ! If the
marriage was over by ten o'clock, Jules will
certainly be here in a minute with his bride.

2d Stud. Good !—only, so should the
poet's muse have been universally accept-
able, says Bluphocks, *et canibus nostris*
. . . and Delia not better known to our
literary dogs than the boy Giovacchino !

1st Stud. To the point, now. Where's
Gottlieb, the new-comer ? Oh,—listen, Gott-
lieb, to what has called down this piece of
friendly vengeance on Jules, of which we
now assemble to witness the winding-up.
We are all agreed, all in a tale, observe,
when Jules shall burst out on us in a fury
by and by ; I am spokesman—the verses
that are to undeceive Jules bear my name
of Lutwyche—but each professes himself
alike insulted by this strutting stone-
squarer, who came along from Paris to
Munich, and thence with a crowd of us to
Venice and Possagno here, but proceeds in
a day or two alone again—oh, alone indu-
bitably ! to Rome and Florence. He, for-
sooth, take up his portion with these disso-
lute, brutalized, heartless bunglers !—so he
was heard to call us all. Now, is Schramm
brutalized, I should like to know ? Am I
heartless ?

Gottlieb. Why, somewhat heartless ; for,
suppose Jules a coxcomb as much as you
choose, still, for this mere coxcombr, you
will have brushed off—what do folks style
it?—the bloom of his life. It is too late to
alter ? These love-letters, now, you call
his—I can't laugh at them.

4th Stud. Because you never read the
sham letters of our inditing which drew
forth these.

Gott. His discovery of the truth will be
frightful.

4th *Stud.* That's the joke. But you should have joined us at the beginning: there's no doubt he loves the girl—loves a model he might hire by the hour!

Gott. See here! "He has been accustomed," he writes, "to have Canova's women about him, in stone, and the world's women beside him, in flesh; these being as much below, as those above, his soul's aspiration: but now he is to have the reality." There you laugh again! I say, you wipe off the very dew of his youth.

1st *Stud.* Schramm! (Take the pipe out of his mouth, somebody!) Will Jules lose the bloom of his youth?

Schramm. Nothing worth keeping is ever lost in this world: look at a blossom—it drops presently, having done its service and lasted its time; but fruits succeed, and where would be the blossom's place could it continue? As well affirm that your eye is no longer in your body, because its earliest favorite, whatever it may have first loved to look on, is dead and done with—as that any affection is lost to the soul when its first object, whatever happened first to satisfy it, is superseded in due course. Keep but ever looking, whether with the body's eye or the mind's, and you will soon find something to look on! Has a man done wondering at women?—there follow men, dead and alive, to wonder at. Has he done wondering at men?—there's God to wonder at: and the faculty of wonder may be, at the same time, old and tired enough with respect to its first object, and yet young and fresh sufficiently, so far as concerns its novel one. Thus . . .

1st *Stud.* Put Schramm's pipe into his mouth again! There, you see! Well, this Jules . . . a wretched fribble—oh, I watched his disportings at Possagno, the other day! Canova's gallery—you know; There he marches first resolutely past great works by the dozen without vouchsafing an eye: all at once he stops full at the *Psiche-fanciulla*—cannot pass that old acquaintance without a nod of encouragement—"In your new place, beauty? Then behave yourself as well here as at Munich—I see you!" Next he posts himself deliberately before the unfinished *Pietà* for half an hour without moving, till up he starts of a sudden, and thrusts his very nose into—I say, into—the group; by which gesture you are informed that precisely the sole point he had not fully mastered in Canova's practice was a certain method of using the drill in the articulation of the knee-joint—and that, likewise, has he mastered at length! Good-by, therefore, to poor Canova—whose gallery no longer needs detain his successor Jules, the predestinated novel thinker in marble!

5th *Stud.* Tell him about the women: go on to the women!

1st *Stud.* Why, on that matter he could never be supercilious enough. How should we be other (he said) than the poor devils, you see, with those debasing habits we cherish! He was not to wallow in that mire, at least; he would wait, and love only at the proper time, and meanwhile put up with the *Psiche-fanciulla*. Now, I happened to hear of a young Greek—real Greek girl at Malamocco: a true Islander, do you see, with Alciphron's "hair like sea-moss"—Schramm knows!—white and quiet as an apparition, and fourteen years old at farthest,—a daughter of Natalia, so she swears—that hag Natalia, who helps us to models at three *lire* an hour. We selected this girl for the heroine of our jest. So, first, Jules received a scented letter—somebody had seen his Tydeus at the Academy, and my picture was nothing to it: a profound admirer bade him persevere—would make herself known to him ere long. (Paolina, my little friend of the *Fenice*, transcribes divinely.) And in due time, the mysterious correspondent gave certain hints of her peculiar charms—the pale cheeks, the black hair—whatever, in short, had struck us in our Malamocco model; we retained her name, too—Phene, which is, by interpretation, sea-eagle. Now, think of Jules finding himself distinguished from the herd of us by such a creature! In his very first answer he proposed marrying his monitress: and fancy us over these letters, two, three times a day, to receive and dispatch! I concocted the main of it: relations were in the way—secrecy must be observed in fine, would he wed her on trust, and only speak to her when they were indissolubly united? St—st—Here they come!

6th *Stud.* Both of them! Heaven's love, speak softly, speak within yourselves!

5th *Stud.* Look at the bridegroom! Half his hair in storm and half in calm,—patted down over the left temple,—like a frothy cup one blows on to cool it: and the same old blouse that he murders the marble in.

2d *Stud.* Not a rich vest like yours, Hannibal Scratchy!—rich, that your face may the better set it off.

6th *Stud.* And the bride! Yes, sure enough, our Phene! Should you have known her in her clothes? How magnificently pale.

Gott. She does not also take it for earnest, I hope?

1st *Stud.* Oh, Natalia's concern, that is. We settle with Natalia.

6th *Stud.* She does not speak—has evidently let out no word. The only thing is, will she equally remember the rest of her lesson, and repeat correctly all those verses which are to break the secret to Jules?

Gott. How he gazes on her! Pity—pity!

1st *Stud.* They go in; now, silence! You three,—not nearer the window, mind,

than that pomegranate; just where the little girl, who a few minutes ago passed us singing, is seated.

II. NOON

Over Orcana. The house of JULES, who crosses its threshold with PHENE: she is silent, on which JULES begins—

Do not die, Phene! I am yours now,
you
Are mine now; let fate reach me how
she likes,
If you'll not die: so, never die! Sit
here—
My work-room's single seat. I over-
lean
This length of hair and lustrous front;
they turn
Like an entire flower upward: eyes,
lips, last
Your chin—no, last your throat turns:
't is their scent
Pulls down my face upon you. Nay,
look ever
This one way till I change, grow you—
I could
Change into you, beloved!

You by me,
And I by you; this is your hand in mine,
And side by side we sit: all's true.
Thank God!

I have spoken: speak you!

O my life to come!
My Tydeus must be carved that's there
in clay;
Yet how be carved, with you about the
room?

Where must I place you? When I think
that once

This room-full of rough block-work
seemed my heaven

Without you! Shall I ever work again,
Get fairly into my old ways again,
Bid each conception stand while, trait
by trait,

My hand transfers its lineaments to
stone?

Will my mere fancies live near you,
their truth—

The live truth, passing and repassing
me,
Sitting beside me?

Now speak!

Only first,
See, all your letters! Was 't not well
contrived?

Their hiding-place is Psyche's robe; she
keeps

Your letters next her skin: which drops
out foremost?

Ah,—this that swam down like a first
moonbeam

Into my world!

Again those eyes complete
Their melancholy survey, sweet and
slow,

Of all my room holds; to return and
rest

On me, with pity, yet some wonder too:
As if God bade some spirit plague a
world,

And this were the one moment of sur-
And sorrow while she took her station,
pausing

O'er what she sees, finds good, and must
destroy!

What gaze you at? Those? Books, I
told you of;

Let your first word to me rejoice them,
too:

This minion, a Coluthus, writ in red,
Bistre and azure by Bessarion's scribe—
Read this line . . . no, shame—Homer's
be the Greek

First breathed me from the lips of my
Greek girl!

This Odyssey in coarse black vivid type
With faded yellow blossoms 'twixt page
and page,

To mark great places with due gratitude;
"He said, and on Antinous directed
A bitter shaft" . . . a flower blots out
the rest!

Again upon your search? My statues,
then!

—Ah, do not mind that—better that will
look

When cast in bronze—an Almain Kai-
ser, that,

Swart-green and gold, with truncheon
based on hip.

This, rather, turn to! What, unrecog-
nized?

I thought you would have seen that here
you sit

As I imagined you,—Hippolyta,
Naked upon her bright Numidian horse.

Recall you this then? "Carve in bold
relief"—

So you commanded—"carve, against I
come,

A Greek, in Athens, as our fashion was,
Feasting, bay-filleted and thunder-free,

Who rises 'neath the lifted myrtle-
branch.

'Praise those who slew Hipparchus!
cry the guests,

Above the world.

You creature with the eyes!
If I could look forever up to them,
As now you let me,—I believe, all sin,
All memory of wrong done, suffering
borne,

Would drop down, low and lower, to the
earth

Whence all that's low comes, and there
touch and stay

—Never to overtake the rest of me,
All that, unspotted, reaches up to you,
Drawn by those eyes! What rises is
myself,

Not me the shame and suffering; but
they sink,

Are left, I rise above them. Keep me
so,

Above the world!

But you sink, for your eyes
Are altering—altered! Stay—"I love
you, love"....

I could prevent it if I understood:
More of your words to me: was't in the
tone

Or the words, your power?

Or stay—I will repeat
Their speech, if that contents you!
Only change

No more, and I shall find it presently
Far back here, in the brain yourself
filled up.

Natalia threatened me that harm should
follow

Unless I spoke their lesson to the end,
But harm to me, I thought she meant,
not you.

Your friends,—Natalia said they were
your friends

And meant you well, — because, I
doubted it,

Observing (what was very strange to
see)

On every face, so different in all else,
The same smile girls like me are used to
bear,

But never men, men cannot stoop so low;
Yet your friends, speaking of you, used
that smile,

That hateful smirk of boundless self-
conceit

Which seems to take possession of the
world

And make of God a tame confederate,
Purveyor to their appetites.....you
know!

But still Natalia said they were your
friends, [the more,

And they assented though they smiled

And all came round me,—that thin Eng-
lishman

With light lank hair seemed leader of
the rest;

He held a paper—"What we want,"
said he,

Ending some explanation to his friends—
"Is something slow, involved and mys-
tical,

To hold Jules long in doubt, yet take his
taste

And lure him on until, at innermost
Where he seeks sweetness' soul, he may
find—this!

—As in the apple's core, the noisome fly:
For insects on the rind are seen at once,
And brushed aside as soon, but this is
found

Only when on the lips or loathing
tongue."

And so he read what I have got by heart:
I'll speak it,—“Do not die, love! I am
yours”....

No—is not that, or like that, part of
words

Yoursself began by speaking? Strange to
lose

What cost such pains to learn! Is this
more right?

I am a painter who cannot paint;

In my life, a devil rather than saint;

In my brain, as poor a creature too:

No end to all I cannot do!

Yet do one thing at least I can—

Love a man or hate a man

Supremely: thus my love began.

Through the Valley of Love I went,

In the loveliest spot to abide,

*And just on the verge where I pitched my
tent,*

I found Hate dwelling beside.

*(Let the Bridegroom ask what the painter
meant,*

Of his Bride, of the peerless Bride!)

And further, I traversed Hate's grove,

In the hatefullest nook to dwell;

*But lo, where I flung myself prone,
couched Love*

Where the shadow threefold fell.

*(The meaning—those black bride's-eyes
above,*

Not a painter's lip should tell!)

“And here,” said he, “Jules probably
will ask,

‘You have black eyes, Love,—you are,
sure enough, [deed

My peerless bride,—then do you tell in-

What needs some explanation! What means this?"

—And I am to go on, without a word—

*So, I grew wise in Love and Hate,
From simple that I was of late.
Once, when I loved, I would enlace
Breast, eyelids, hands, feet, form and face*

*Of her I loved, in one embrace—
As if by mere love I could love immensely!*

*Once, when I hated, I would plunge
My sword, and wipe with the first lunge
My foe's whole life out like a sponge—
As if by mere hate I could hate intensely!
But now I am wiser, know better the fashion*

How passion seeks aid from its opposite passion:

And if I see cause to love more, hate more

*Than ever man loved, ever hated before—
And seek in the Valley of Love*

The nest, or the nook in Hate's Grove

Where my soul may surely reach

The essence, naught less, of each,

The Hate of all Hates, the Love

Of all Loves, in the Valley or Grove,—

I find them the very warders

Each of the other's borders.

When I love most, Love is disguised

In Hate; and when Hate is surprised

In Love, then I hate most: ask

How Love smiles through Hate's iron casque,

Hate grins through Love's rose-braided mask,—

And how, having hated thee,

I sought long and painfully

To reach thy heart, nor prick

The skin but pierce to the quick—

Ask this, my Jules, and be answered straight

By thy bride—how the painter Lutwyche can hate!

JULES interposes.

Lutwyche! Who else? But all of them, no doubt,

Hated me: they at Venice—presently

Their turn, however! You I shall not meet:

If I dreamed, saying this would wake me.

Keep

What's here, the gold—we cannot meet again,

Consider. and the money was but meant
For two years' travel, which is over now.
All chance or hope or care or need of it,
This—and what comes from selling these,

my casts

And books and medals, except . . . let them go

Together, so the produce keeps you safe
Out of Natalia's clutches! If by chance

(For all's chance here) I should survive the gang

At Venice, root out all fifteen of them,

We might meet somewhere, since the world is wide.

From without is heard the voice of PIPPA, singing—

Give her but a least excuse to love me!

When—where—

How—can this arm establish her above me,

If fortune fixed her as my lady there,

There already, to eternally reprove me?

("Hist!"—said Kate the Queen;

But "Oh!" cried the maiden, binding her tresses,

*"'T is only a page that carols unseen,
Crumbling your hounds their messes!")*

Is she wronged?—To the rescue of her honor,

My heart!

Is she poor?—What costs it to be styled a donor?

*Merely an earth to cleave, a sea to part.
But that fortune should have thrust*

all this upon her!

*("Nay, list!"—bade Kate the Queen;
And still cried the maiden, binding her tresses,*

*"'T is only a page that carols unseen,
Fitting your hawks their jesses!")*

PIPPA passes.

JULES resumes.

What name was that the little girl sang forth?

Kate? The Cornaro, doubtless, who renounced

The crown of Cyprus to be lady here

At Asolo, where still her memory stays.

And peasants sing how once a certain page

Pined for the grace of her so far above
His power of doing good to, "Kate the Queen—

She never could be wronged, be poor,"

he sighed,
"Need him to help her!"

Yes, a bitter thing
To see our lady above all need of us;
Yet so we look ere we will love; not I,
But the world looks so. If whoever
loves

Must be, in some sort, god or worship-
per,

The blessing or the blest one, queen or
page,

Why should we always choose the page's
part?

Here is a woman with utter need of
me,—

I find myself queen here, it seems!

How strange!

Look at the woman here with the new
soul,

Like my own Psyche,—fresh upon her
lips

Alit, the visionary butterfly,
Waiting my word to enter and make
bright,

Or flutter off and leave all blank as first.
This body had no soul before, but slept
Or stirred, was beauteous or ungainly,
free

From taint or foul with stain, as outward
things

Fastened their image on its passiveness:
Now it will wake, feel, live—or die again!
Shall to produce form out of unshaped
stuff

Be Art—and further, to evoke a soul
From form be nothing? This new soul is
mine!

Now, to kill Lutwyche, what would that
do?—save

A wretched dauber, men will hoot to
death

Without me, from their hooting. Oh,
to hear

God's voice plain as I heard it first, be-
fore

They broke in with their laughter! I
heard them

Henceforth, not God.

To Ancona—Greece—some isle!
I wanted silence only; there is clay
Everywhere. One may do whate'er one
likes

In Art: the only thing is, to make sure
That one does like it—which takes pains
to know.

Scatter all this, my Phene—this mad
dream!

Who, what is Lutwyche, what Natalia's
friends, [my own,

What the whole world except our love—

Own Phene? But I told you, did I not,
Ere night we travel for your land—some
isle

With the sea's silence on it? Stand aside—
I do but break these paltry models up—

To begin Art afresh. Meet Lutwyche,
I— [him?

And save him from my statue meeting
Some unsuspected isle in the far seas!

Like a god going through his world,
there stands

One mountain for a moment in the dusk,
Whole brotherhoods of cedars on its
brow:

And you are ever by me while I gaze
—Are in my arms as now—as now—as
now!

Some unsuspected isle in the far seas!
Some unsuspected isle in far-off seas!

*Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing from Or-
cana to the Turret. Two or three of the Aus-
trian Police loitering with BLUPHOCKS, an
English vagabond, just in view of the Turret.*

Bluphocks. So, that is your Pippa, the
little girl who passed us singing? Well,
your Bishop's Intendant's money shall be
honestly earned:—now, don't make me
that sour face because I bring the Bishop's
name into the business; we know he can
have nothing to do with such horrors: we
know that he is a saint and all that a bishop
should be, who is a great man beside. *Oh
were but every worm a maggot, Every fly
a grig, Every bough a Christmas fagot,
Every tune a jig!* In fact, I have abjured
all religions; but the last I inclined to was
the Armenian: for I have travelled, do you
see, and at Koenigsberg, Prussia Improper
(so styled because there's a sort of bleak
hungry sun there), you might remark, over
a venerable house-porch, a certain Chaldee
inscription; and brief as it is, a mere
glance at it used absolutely to change the
mood of every bearded passenger. In they
turned, one and all; the young and light-
some, with no irreverent pause, the aged
and decrepit, with a sensible alacrity:
'twas the Grand Rabbi's abode, in short.
Struck with curiosity, I lost no time in
learning Syriac—(these are vowels, you dogs
—follow my stick's end in the mud—*Celar-
ent, Darii, Ferio!*) and one morning pre-
sented myself, spelling-book in hand, a, b,
c,—I picked it out letter by letter, and what
was the purport of this miraculous posy?
Some cherished legend of the past, you'll
say—"How Moses hocuspocussed Egypt's
land with fly and locust,"—or "How to
Jonah sounded harshish, Get thee up and
go to Tarshish,"—or "How the angel
meeting Balaam, Straight his ass returned
a salaam." In no wise! "Shackabrack—
Boach—somebody or other—Isaach, Re-

cei-ver, Pur-cha-ser and Ex-chan-ger of—Stolen Goods!" So talk to me of the religion of a bishop! I have renounced all bishops save Bishop Beveridge!—mean to live so—and die—*As some Greek dog-sage dead and merry, Hellward bound in Charon's wherry, With food for both worlds, under and upper, Lupine-seed and Hecate's supper, And never an obolus.* . . (though thanks to you, or this Intendant—through you, or this Bishop through his Intendant—I possess a burning pocket-full of *zwanzigers*) . . . *To pay the Stygian Ferry!*

1st Policeman. There is the girl, then; go and deserve them the moment you have pointed out to us Signor Luigi and his mother. [*To the rest.*] I have been noticing a house yonder, this long while: not a shutter unclosed since morning!

2d Pol. Old Luca Gaddi's, that owns the silk-mills here: he dozes by the hour, wakes up, sighs deeply, says he should like to be Prince Metternich, and then dozes again, after having bidden young Sebald, the foreigner, set his wife to playing draughts. Never molest such a household, they mean well.

Blup. Only, cannot you tell me something of this little Pippa, I must have to do with? One could make something of that name. Pippa—that is, short for Felippa—rhyming to *Panurge consults Hertrip-pa—Believest thou King Agrippa?* Something might be done with that name.

2d Pol. Put into rhyme that your head and a ripe muskmelon would not be dear at half a *zwanziger*! Leave this fooling, and look out; the afternoon's over or nearly so.

3d Pol. Where in this passport of Signor Luigi does our Principal instruct you to watch him so narrowly? There? What's there beside a simple signature? (That English fool's busy watching.)

2d Pol. Flourish all round—"Put all possible obstacles in his way;" oblong dot at the end—"Detain him till further advices reach you;" scratch at bottom—"Send him back on pretence of some informality in the above;" ink-spirit on right hand side (which is the case here)—"Arrest him at once." Why and wherefore, I don't concern myself, but my instructions amount to this: if Signor Luigi leaves home to-night for Vienna—well and good, the passport deposited with us for our *visa* is really for his own use, they have misinformed the Office, and he means well; but let him stay over to-night—there has been the pretence we suspect, the accounts of his corresponding and holding intelligence with the Carbonari are correct, we arrest him at once, to-morrow comes Venice, and presently Spielberg. Bluphocks makes the signal, sure enough! That is he, entering the turret with his mother, no doubt.

III. EVENING

Inside the Turret on the Hill above Asolo. LUIGI and his MOTHER entering.

Mother. If there blew wind, you'd hear a long sigh, easing
The utmost heaviness of music's heart.

Luigi. Here in the archway?

Mother. Oh no, no—in farther,
Where the echo is made, on the ridge.

Luigi. Here surely, then.
How plain the tap of my heel as I leaped up!

Hark—"Lucius Junius!" The very
ghost of a voice
Whose body is caught and kept by . . .
what are those?

Mere withered wallflowers, waving over-
head?

They seem an elvish group with thin
bleached hair

That lean out of their topmost fortress—
look

And listen, mountain men, to what we
say,

Hand under chin of each grave earthy
face.

Up and show faces all of you!—"All of
you!"

That's the king dwarf with the scarlet
comb; old Franz,

Come down and meet your fate? Hark—
"Meet your fate!"

Mother. Let him not meet it, my
Luigi—do not

Go to his City! Putting crime aside,
Half of these ills of Italy are feigned:

Your Pellicos and writers for effect,
Write for effect.

Luigi. Hush! Say A writes, and B.

Mother. These A's and B's write for
effect, I say.

Then, evil is in its nature loud, while
good

Is silent; you hear each petty injury,
None of his virtues; he is old beside,

Quiet and kind, and densely stupid.
Why

Do A and B kill not him themselves?

Luigi. They teach

Others to kill him—me—and, if I fail,
Others to succeed; now, if A tried and

failed,
I could not teach that: mine's the lesser
task.

Mother. They visit night by night . . .

Mother. —You, Luigi?

Ah, will you let me tell you what you
are?

Luigi. Why not? Oh, the one thing
you fear to hint,
You may assure yourself I say and say
Ever to myself! At times—nay, even
as now

We sit—I think my mind is touch'd,
suspect

All is not sound: but is not knowing
that,

What constitutes one sane or otherwise?
I know I am thus—so, all is right again.
I laugh at myself as through the town I
walk,

And see men merry as if no Italy
Were suffering; then I ponder—"I am
rich,

Young, healthy; why should this fact
trouble me,

More than it troubles these?" But it
does trouble.

No, trouble's a bad word: for as I walk
There's springing and melody and giddi-
ness,

And old quaint turns and passages of
my youth,

Dreams long forgotten, little in them-
selves,

Return to me—whatever may amuse me:
And earth seems in a truce with me, and
heaven

Accords with me, all things suspend
their strife,

The very cicala laughs "There goes he,
and there!

Feast him, the time is short; he is on
his way

For the world's sake: feast him this once,
our friend!"

And in return for all this, I can trip
Cheerfully up the scaffold-steps. I go
This evening, mother!

Mother. But mistrust yourself—
Mistrust the judgment you pronounce
on him!

Luigi. Oh, there I feel—am sure that
I am right!

Mother. Mistrust your judgment then,
of the mere means

To this wild enterprise: say, you are
right,—

How should one in your state e'er bring
to pass

What would require a cool head, a cool
heart,

And a calm hand? You never will es-
cape.

Luigi. Escape? To even wish that,
would spoil all.

The dying is best part of it. Too much

Have I enjoyed these fifteen years of
mine,

To leave myself excuse for longer life:
Was not life pressed down, running o'er

with joy,
That I might finish with it ere my
fellows

Who, sparelily feasted, make a longer
stay?

I was put at the board-head, helped to
all

At first; I rise up happy and content.
God must be glad one loves his world so

much.
I can give news of earth to all the dead

Who ask me:—last year's sunsets, and
great stars

Which had a right to come first and see
ebb

The crimson wave that drifts the sun
away—

Those crescent moons with notched and
burning rims

That strengthened into sharp fire, and
there stood,

Impatient of the azure—and that day
In March, a double rainbow stopped the

storm—
May's warm slow yellow moonlit summer

nights—
Gone are they, but I have them in my

soul!

Mother. (He will not go!)
Luigi. You smile at me? 'T is true,—

Voluptuousness, grotesqueness, ghastli-
ness,

Environ my devotedness as quaintly
As round about some antique altar

wreath
The rose festoons, goats' horns, and
oxen's skulls.

Mother. See now: you reach the city,
you must cross

His threshold—how?
Luigi. Oh, that's if we conspired!

Then would come pains in plenty, as
you guess—

But guess not how the qualities most fit
For such an office, qualities I have,

Would little stead me, otherwise em-
ployed,

Yet prove of rarest merit only here.
Every one knows for what his excellence

Will serve, but no one ever will consider
For what his worst defect might serve:

and yet
Have you not seen me range our coppice
yonder

In search of a distorted ash?—I find

The wry spoilt branch a natural perfect
bow.

Fancy the thrice-sage, thrice-precau-
tioned man

Arriving at the palace on my errand !

No, no ! I have a handsome dress packed
up—

White satin here, to set off my black
hair ;

In I shall march—for you may watch
your life out

Behind thick walls, make friends there
to betray you ;

More than one man spoils everything.
March straight—

Only, no clumsy knife to fumble for,
Take the great gate, and walk (not
saunter) on

Through guards and guards—I have re-
hearsed it all

Inside the turret here a hundred times.

Don't ask the way of whom you meet,
observe !

But where they cluster thickliest is the
door

Of doors ; they'll let you pass—they'll
never blab

Each to the other, he knows not the
favorite,

Whence he is bound and what's his
business now.

Walk in—straight up to him ; you have
no knife :

Be prompt, how should he scream ? Then
out with you !

Italy, Italy, my Italy !

You're free, you're free ! Oh mother, I
could dream

They got about me—Andrea from his
exile,

Pier from his dungeon, Gualtier from
his grave !

Mother. Well, you shall go. Yet seems
this patriotism

The easiest virtue for a selfish man

To acquire : he loves himself—and next,
the world—

If he must love beyond,—but naught
between : [way

As a short-sighted man sees naught mid-
His body and the sun above. But you

Are my adored Luigi, ever obedient

To my least wish, and running o'er with
love :

I could not call you cruel or unkind.

Once more, your ground for killing him !
—then go !

Luigi. Now do you try me, or make
sport of me ?

How first the Austrians got these prov-
inces . . .

(If that is all, I'll satisfy you soon)

—Never by conquest but by cunning, for
That treaty whereby . . .

Mother. Well !

Luigi. (Sure, he's arrived,

The tell-tale cuckoo : spring's his confi-
dant,

And he lets out her April purposes !)

Or . . . better go at once to modern
time.

He has . . . they have . . . in fact, I un-
derstand

But can't restate the matter : that's my
boast :

Others could reason it out to you, and
prove

Things they have made me feel.

Mother. Why go to-night ?

Morn's for adventure. Jupiter is now

A morning-star. I cannot hear you,
Luigi !

Luigi. "I am the bright and morning-
star," saith God—

And "to such an one I give the morning-
star."

The gift of the morning-star ! Have I
God's gift

Of the morning-star ?

Mother. Chiara will love to see

That Jupiter an evening-star next June.

Luigi. True, mother. Well for those
who live through June !

Great noontides, thunder-storms, all
glaring pomps

That triumph at the heels of June the
god

Leading his revel through our leafy
world.

Yes, Chiara will be here.

Mother. In June : remember.

Yourself appointed that month for her
coming.

Luigi. Was that low noise the echo ?

Mother. The night wind.

She must be grown—with her blue eyes
upturned

As if life were one long and sweet sur-
prise :

In June she comes.

Luigi. We were to see together

The Titian at Treviso. There, again !

[From without is heard the voice of PIPPA
singing—

A king lived long ago,

In the morning of the world,

When earth was nigher heaven than now ;

*And the king's locks curled,
Disparting o'er a forehead full
As the milk-white space 'twixt horn and
horn*

*Of some sacrificial bull—
Only calm as a babe new-born :
For he was got to a sleepy mood,
So safe from all decrepitude,
Age with its bane, so sure gone by,
(The gods so loved him while he dreamed)
That, having lived thus long, there seemed
No need the king should ever die.*

Luigi. No need that sort of king should
ever die !

*Among the rocks his city was :
Before his palace, in the sun,
He sat to see his people pass,
And judge them every one
From its threshold of smooth stone.
They hailed him many a valley-thief
Caught in the sheep-pens, robber-chief
Swarthy and shameless, beggar-cheat,
Spy-prowler, or rough pirate found
On the sea-sand left aground ;*

*And sometimes clung about his feet,
With bleeding lip and burning cheek,
A woman, bitterest wrong to speak
Of one with sullen thickset brows :
And sometimes from the prison-house
The angry priests a pale wretch
brought,*

*Who through some chink had pushed
and pressed*

*On knees and elbows, belly and breast,
Worm-like into the temple,— caught
He was by the very god.
Who ever in the darkness strode
Backward and forward, keeping watch
O'er his brazen bowls, such rogues to
catch !*

*These, all and every one,
The king judged, sitting in the sun.*

Luigi. That king should still judge,
sitting in the sun !

*His councillors, on left and right,
Looked anxious up,—but no surprise
Disturbed the king's old smiling eyes
Where the very blue had turned to
white.*

*'T is said, a Python scared one day
The breathless city, till he came,
With forked tongue and eyes on flame,
Where the old king sat to judge away ;
But when he saw the sweepy hair
Girt with a crown of berries rare
Which the god will hardly give to wear*

*To the maiden who singeth, dancing
bare
In the altar-smoke by the pine-torch
lights.*

*At his wondrous forest rites,—
Seeing this he did not dare
Approach that threshold in the sun,
Assault the old king smiling there.
Such grace had kings when the world
began !*

PIPPA passes.

Luigi. And such grace have they,
now that the world ends !
The Python at the city, on the throne,
And brave men, God would crown for
slaying him,
Lurk in by-corners lest they fall his
prey.
Are crowns yet to be won in this late
time
Which weakness makes me hesitate to
reach ?
'T is God's voice calls : how could I stay ?
Farewell !

*Talk by the way, while PIPPA is passing from the
Turret to the Bishop's Brother's House, close
to the Duomo S. Maria. Poor GIRLS sitting on
the steps.*

1st Girl. There goes a swallow to
Venice—the stout seafarer !
Seeing those birds fly, makes one wish
for wings.

Let us all wish ; you, wish first !

2d Girl. I ? This sunset
To finish.

3d Girl. That old — somebody I
know,

Grayer and older than my grandfather,
To give me the same treat he gave last
week—

Feeding me on his knee with fig-
peckers,

Lampreys and red Breganze-wine, and
mumbling

The while some folly about how well I
fare,

Let sit and eat my supper quietly :
Since had he not himself been late this
morning

Detained at—never mind where,—had
he not . . .

“ Eh, baggage, had I not ! ”—

2d Girl. How she can lie !

3d Girl. Look there—by the nails !

2d Girl. What makes your fingers
red ?

3d Girl. Dipping them into wine to
write bad words with

On the bright table : how he laughed !

1st Girl. My turn.
Spring 's come and summer 's coming.

I would wear
A long loose-gown, down to the feet and hands,

With plaits here, close about the throat,
all day ;

And all night lie, the cool long nights
in bed ;

And have new milk to drink, apples to eat,

Deuzans and junetings, leather-coats . . .
ah, I should say,

This is away in the fields—miles !

3d Girl. Say at once
You 'd be at home : she 'd always be at home !

Now comes the story of the farm among
The cherry orchards, and how April snowed

White blossoms on her as she ran.

Why, fool,
They 've rubbed the chalk-mark out,
how tall you were,

Twisted your starling's neck, broken
his cage,

Made a dung-hill of your garden !

1st Girl. They destroy
My garden since I left them ? well—
perhaps

I would have done so : so I hope they
have !

A fig-tree curled out of our cottage
wall ;

They called it mine, I have forgotten
why.

It must have been there long ere I was
born :

Cric—cric—I think I hear the wasps
o'erhead

Pricking the papers strung to flutter
there

And keep off birds in fruit-time—coarse
long papers,

And the wasps eat them, prick them
through and through.

3d Girl.—How her mouth twitches !
Where was I ?—before

She broke in with her wishes and long
gowns

And wasps—would I be such a fool !—
Oh, here !

This is my way : I answer every one
Who asks me why I make so much of
him—

(If you say “ you love him ”—straight
“ he 'll not be gulled ! ”)

“ He that seduced me when I was a girl

Thus high—had eyes like yours, or hair
like yours,

Brown, red, white.”—as the case may
be : that pleases.

See how that beetle burnishes in the
path !

There sparkles he along the dust : and
there—

Your journey to that maize tuft spoiled
at least !

1st Girl. When I was young, they
said if you killed one

Of those sunshiny beetles, that his friend
Up there, would shine no more that day

nor next.

2d Girl. When you were young ? nor
are you young, that 's true.

How your plump arms, that were, have
dropped away !

Why, I can span them. Cecco beats
you still ?

No matter, so you keep your curious
hair.

I wish they 'd find a way to dye our
Your color—any lighter tint, indeed

Than black : the men say they are sick
of black,

Black eyes, black hair !

4th Girl. Sick of yours, like enough.
Do you pretend you ever tasted lam-

preys
And ortolans ? Giovita, of the palace,

Engaged (but there's no trusting him)
to slice me

Polenta with a knife that had cut up

An ortolan.

2d Girl. Why, there ! Is not that
Pippa

We are to talk to, under the window,—
quick !—

Where the lights are ?

1st Girl. That she ? No, or she would
sing,

For the Intendant said . . .

3d Girl. Oh, you sing first !
Then, if she listens and comes close . . .

I 'll tell you,—
Sing that song the young English noble

made,
Who took you for the purest of the pure,

And meant to leave the world for you—
what fun !

2d Girl. [*Sings.*]

You 'll love me yet !—and I can tarry

Your love's protracted growing :

June reared that bunch of flowers you
carry,

From seeds of April's sowing.

*I plant a heartfull now : some seed
At least is sure to strike,
And yield—what you 'll not pluck indeed,
Not love, but, may be, like.*

*You 'll look at least on love's remains,
A grave's one violet :
Your look ?—that pays a thousand pains.
What's death ? You 'll love me yet !*

3d Girl. [To PIPPA who approaches.] Oh, you may come closer—we shall not eat you ! Why, you seem the very person that the great rich handsome Englishman has fallen so violently in love with. I'll tell you all about it.

IV. NIGHT

*Inside the Palace by the Duomo. MONSIGNOR,
dismissing his Attendants.*

Monsignor. Thanks, friends, many thanks ! I chiefly desire life now, that I may recompense every one of you. Most I know something of already. What, a repast prepared ? *Benedictio benedicatur* . . . ugh, ugh ! Where was I ? Oh, as you were remarking, Ugo, the weather is mild, very unlike winter-weather ; but I am a Sicilian, you know, and shiver in your Julys here. To be sure, when 't was full summer at Messina, as we priests used to cross in procession the great square on Assumption Day, you might see our thickest yellow tapers twist suddenly in two, each like a falling star, or sink down on themselves in a gore of wax. But go, my friends, but go ! [To the Intendant.] Not you, Ugo ! [The others leave the apartment.] I have long wanted to converse with you, Ugo.

Intendant. Uguccio—

Mon. . . . 'guccio Stefani, man ! of Ascoli, Fermo and Fossombruno ;—what I do need instructing about, are these accounts of your administration of my poor brother's affairs. Ugh ! I shall never get through a third part of your accounts ; take some of these dainties before we attempt it, however. Are you bashful to that degree ? For me, a crust and water suffice.

Inten. Do you choose this especial night to question me ?

Mon. This night, Ugo. You have managed my late brother's affairs since the death of our elder brother : fourteen years and a month, all but three days. On the Third of December, I find him . . .

Inten. If you have so intimate an acquaintance with your brother's affairs, you will be tender of turning so far back : they will hardly bear looking into, so far back.

Mon. Ay, ay, ugh, ugh,—nothing but disappointments here below ! I remarked a considerable payment made to yourself

on this Third of December. Talk of disappointments ! There was a young fellow here, Jules, a foreign sculptor I did my utmost to advance, that the Church might be a gainer by us both : he was going on hopefully enough, and of a sudden he notifies to me some marvellous change that has happened in his notions of Art. Here's his letter,—“He never had a clearly conceived Ideal within his brain till to-day. Yet since his hand could manage a chisel, he has practised expressing other men's Ideals ; and, in the very perfection he has attained to, he foresees an ultimate failure : his unconscious hand will pursue its prescribed course of old years, and will reproduce with a fatal expertness the ancient types, let the novel one appear never so palpably to his spirit. There is but one method of escape : confiding the virgin type to as chaste a hand, he will turn painter instead of sculptor, and paint, not carve, its characteristics,”—strike out, I dare say, a school like Correggio : how think you, Ugo ?

Inten. Is Correggio a painter ?

Mon. Foolish Jules ! and yet, after all, why foolish ? He may—probably will—fail egregiously ; but if there should arise a new painter, will it not be in some such way, by a poet now, or a musician (spirits who have conceived and perfected an Ideal through some other channel), transferring it to this, and escaping our conventional roads by pure ignorance of them ; eh, Ugo ? If you have no appetite, talk at least, Ugo ?

Inten. Sir, I can submit no longer to this course of yours. First, you select the group of which I formed one,—next you thin it gradually,—always retaining me with your smile,—and so do you proceed till you have fairly got me alone with you between four stone walls. And now then ? Let this farce, this chatter end now : what is it you want with me ?

Mon. Ugo !

Inten. From the instant you arrived, I felt your smile on me as you questioned me about this and the other article in those papers—why your brother should have given me this villa, that *podere*,—and your nod at the end meant,—what ?

Mon. Possibly that I wished for no loud talk here. If once you set me coughing, Ugo !—

Inten. I have your brother's hand and seal to all I possess : now ask me what for ! what service I did him—ask me !

Mon. I would better not : I should rip up old disgraces, let out my poor brother's weaknesses. By the way, Maffeo of Forlì, (which, I forgot to observe, is your true name,) was the interdict ever taken off you for robbing that church at Cesena ?

Inten. No, nor needs be : for when I murdered your brother's friend, Pasquale, for him . . .

Mon. Ah, he employed you in that business, did he? Well, I must let you keep, as you say, this villa and that *podere*, for fear the world should find out my relations were of so indifferent a stamp? Maffeo, my family is the oldest in Messina, and century after century have my progenitors gone on polluting themselves with every wickedness under heaven: my own father . . . rest his soul!—I have, I know, a chapel to support that it may rest: my dear two dead brothers were,—what you know tolerably well; I, the youngest, might have rivalled them in vice, if not in wealth: but from my boyhood I came out from among them, and so am not partaker of their plagues. My glory springs from another source; or if from this, by contrast only,—for I, the bishop, am the brother of your employers, Ugo. I hope to repair some of their wrong, however; so far as my brother's ill-gotten treasure reverts to me, I can stop the consequences of his crime: and not one *soldo* shall escape me. Maffeo, the sword we quiet men spurn away, you shrewd knaves pick up and commit murders with; what opportunities the virtuous forego, the villanous seize. Because, to pleasure myself apart from other considerations, my food would be millet-cake, my dress sack-cloth, and my couch straw,—am I therefore to let you, the off-scouring of the earth, seduce the poor and ignorant by appropriating a pomp these will be sure to think lessens the abominations so unaccountably and exclusively associated with it? Must I let villas and *poderi* go to you, a murderer and thief, that you may beget by means of them other murderers and thieves? No—if my cough would but allow me to speak!

Inten. What am I to expect? You are going to punish me?

Mon. Must punish you, Maffeo. I cannot afford to cast away a chance. I have whole centuries of sin to redeem, and only a month or two of life to do it in. How should I dare to say . . .

Inten. "Forgive us our trespasses"?

Mon. My friend, it is because I avow myself a very worm, sinful beyond measure, that I reject a line of conduct you would applaud perhaps. Shall I proceed, as it were, a-pardoning?—I?—who have no symptom of reason to assume that aught less than my strenuous efforts will keep myself out of mortal sin, much less keep others out. No: I do trespass, but will not double that by allowing you to trespass.

Inten. And suppose the villas are not your brother's to give, nor yours to take? Oh, you are hasty enough just now!

Mon. 1, 2—No 3!—ay, can you read the substance of a letter, No 3, I have received from Rome? It is precisely on the ground there mentioned, of the suspicion I have that a certain child of my late elder brother,

who would have succeeded to his estates, was murdered in infancy by you, Maffeo, at the instigation of my late younger brother—that the Pontiff enjoins on me not merely the bringing that Maffeo to condign punishment, but the taking all pains, as guardian of the infant's heritage for the Church, to recover it parcel by parcel, howsoever, whensoever, and wheresoever. While you are now gnawing those fingers, the police are engaged in sealing up your papers, Maffeo, and the mere raising my voice brings my people from the next room to dispose of yourself. But I want you to confess quietly, and save me raising my voice. Why, man, do I not know the old story? The heir between the succeeding heir, and this heir's ruffianly instrument, and their complot's effect, and the life of fear and bribes and ominous smiling silence? Did you throttle or stab my brother's infant? Come now!

Inten. So old a story, and tell it no better? When did such an instrument ever produce such an effect? Either the child smiles in his face; or, most likely, he is not fool enough to put himself in the employer's power so thoroughly: the child is always ready to produce—as you say—howsoever, wheresoever, and whensoever.

Mon. Liar!

Inten. Strike me? Ah, so might a father chastise! I shall sleep soundly to-night at least, though the gallows await me to-morrow; for what a life did I lead! Carlo of Cesena reminds me of his connivance, every time I pay his annuity; which happens commonly thrice a year. If I remonstrate, he will confess all to the good bishop—*you!*

Mon. I see through the trick, caitiff! I would you spoke truth for once. All shall be sifted, however—seven times sifted.

Inten. And how my absurd riches encumbered me! I dared not lay claim to above half of my possessions. Let me but once unbosom myself, glorify Heaven, and die!

Sir, you are no brutal dastardly idiot like your brother I frightened to death: let us understand one another. Sir, I will make away with her for you—the girl—here close at hand; not the stupid obvious kind of killing; do not speak—know nothing of her nor of me! I see her every day—saw her this morning; of course there is to be no killing; but at Rome the courtesans perish off every three years, and I can entice her thither—have indeed begun operations already. There is a certain lusty blue-eyed florid-complexioned English knave, I and the Police employ occasionally. You assent, I perceive—no, that's not it—assent I do not say—but you will let me convert my present havings and holdings into cash, and give me time to cross the Alps? 'T is

but a little black-eyed pretty singing Felippa, gay silk-winding girl. I have kept her out of harm's way up to this present; for I always intended to make your life a plague to you with her. 'Tis as well settled once and for ever. Some women I have procured will pass Bluphocks, my handsome scoundrel, off for somebody; and once Pippa entangled!—you conceive? Through her singing? Is it a bargain?

[From without is heard the voice of PIPPA singing—

*Overhead the tree-tops meet,
Flowers and grass spring 'neath one's feet;*

There was naught above me, naught below,

*My childhood had not learned to know:
For, what are the voices of birds*

—Ah, and of beasts, but words, our words.

*Only so much more sweet?
The knowledge of that with my life begun.*

*But I had so near made out the sun,
And counted your stars, the seven and one,*

*Like the fingers of my hand:
Nay, I could all but understand
Wherefore through heaven the white moon ranges;*

And just when out of her soft fifty changes

No unfamiliar face might over-look me—

Suddenly God took me.

[PIPPA passes.

Mon. [Springing up.] My people—one and all—within there! Gag this villain—tie him hand and foot! He dares . . . I know not half he dares—but remove him—quick! Miserere mei, Domine! Quick, I say!

PIPPA'S Chamber again. *She enters it.*

The bee with his comb,
The mouse at her dray,
The grub in his tomb,
While winter away;

But the fire-fly and hedge-shrew and lob-worm, I pray,

How fare they?

Ha, ha, thanks for your counsel, my Zanze!

“Feast upon lampreys, quaff Brenganze”—

The summer of life so easy to spend,
And care for to-morrow so soon put away!

But winter hastens at summer's end,
And fire-fly, hedge-shrew, lob-worm,
I pray,

How fare they?

No bidding me then to . . . what did Zanze say?

“Pare your nails pearlwise, get your small feet shoes

More like” . . . (what said she?)—“and less like canoes!”

How pert that girl was!—would I be those pert

Impudent staring women! It had done me,

However, surely no such mighty hurt
To learn his name who passed that jest upon me:

No foreigner, that I can recollect,
Came, as she says, a month since, to inspect

Our silk-mills—none with blue eyes and thick rings

Of raw-silk-colored hair, at all events.
Well, if old Luca keep his good intents,
We shall do better, see what next year brings!

I may buy shoes, my Zanze, not appear
More destitute than you perhaps next year!

Bluph . . . something! I had caught the uncouth name

But for Monsignor's people's sudden clatter

Above us—bound to spoil such idle chatter

As ours; it were indeed a serious matter
If silly talk like ours should put to shame
The pious man, the man devoid of blame,
The . . . ah but—ah but, all the same,
No mere mortal has a right

To carry that exalted air;
Best people are not angels quite:

While—not the worst of people's doings scare [spare!

The devil; so there's that proud look to Which is mere counsel to myself,

mind! for

I have just been the holy Monsignor:
And I was you, too, Luigi's gentle

mother,

And you too, Luigi!—how that Luigi started

Out of the turret—doubtlessly departed
On some good errand or another.

For he passed just now in a traveller's trim,

And the sullen company that prowled
About his path, I noticed, scowled

As if they had lost a prey in him.

And I was Jules the sculptor's bride,
 And I was Ottima beside,
 And now what am I?—tired of fooling.
 Day for folly, night for schooling!
 New year's day is over and spent,
 Ill or well, I must be content.

Even my lily's asleep, I vow:
 Wake up—here's a friend I've plucked
 you!

Call this flower a heart's-ease now!
 Something rare, let me instruct you,
 Is this, with petals triply swollen,
 Three times spotted, thrice the pollen;
 While the leaves and parts that witness
 Old proportions and their fitness,
 Here remain unchanged, unmoved now;
 Call this pampered thing improved now!
 Suppose there's a king of the flowers
 And a girl-show held in his bowers—
 "Look ye, buds, this growth of ours,"
 Says he, "Zanze from the Brenta,
 I have made her gorge polenta
 Till both cheeks are near as bouncing
 As her . . . name there's no pronounc-
 ing!

See this heightened color too,
 For she swilled Breganze wine
 Till her nose turned deep carmine;
 'T was but white when wild she grew.
 And only by this Zanze's eyes
 Of which we could not change the size,
 The magnitude of all achieved
 Otherwise, may be perceived."

Oh what a drear dark close to my poor
 day!

How could that red sun drop in that
 black cloud?

Ah Pippa, morning's rule is moved away,
 Dispensed with, never more to be al-
 lowed!

Day's turn is over, now arrives the
 night's.

Oh lark, be day's apostle
 To mavis, merle and throstle,
 Bid them their betters jostle
 From day and its delights!
 But at night, brother owlet, over the
 woods,

Toll the world to thy chantry;
 Sing to the bats' sleek sisterhoods
 Full complines with gallantry:
 Then, owls and bats,
 Cows and twats,

Monks and nuns, in a cloister's moods,
 Adjourn to the oak-stump pantry!

[After she has begun to undress herself.]
 Now, one thing I should like to really
 know:

How near I ever might approach all
 these

I only fancied being, this long day:
 —Approach, I mean, so as to touch them,

so
 As to . . . in some way . . . move them—
 if you please,

Do good or evil to them some slight way.
 For instance, if I wind

Silk to-morrow, my silk may bind
 [Sitting on the bedside.]

And border Ottima's cloak's hem.

Ah me, and my important part with
 them,

This morning's hymn half promised
 when I rose!

True in some sense or other, I suppose.

[As she lies down.]
 God bless me! I can pray no more to-
 night.

No doubt, some way or other, hymns say
 right.

*All service ranks the same with God—
 With God, whose puppets, best and worst,
 Are we; there is no last nor first.*

[She sleeps.]
 1841.

CAVALIER TUNES

I. MARCHING ALONG

KENTISH Sir Byng stood for his King,
 Bidding the crop-headed Parliament
 swing:

And, pressing a troop unable to stoop
 And see the rogues flourish and honest
 folk droop,

Marched them along, fifty-score strong,
 Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this
 song.

God for King Charles! Pym and such
 carles

To the Devil that prompts 'em their
 treasonous parles!

Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup,
 Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor
 sup

Till you 're—

CHORUS.—Marching along, fifty-score
 strong,
 Great-hearted gentlemen,
 singing this song.

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies'
 knell.

Serve Hazerlig, Fiennes, and young
 Harry as well!

England, good cheer! Rupert is near!
Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,

CHORUS.—Marching along, fifty-score
strong,

Great-hearted gentlemen, sing-
ing this song?

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and
his snarls

To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent
carles!

Hold by the right, you double your
might;

So, onward to Nottingham, fresh for
the fight,

CHORUS.—March we along, fifty-score
strong,

Great-hearted gentlemen, sing-
ing this song!

II. GIVE A ROUSE

King Charles, and who 'll do him right
now?

King Charles, and who 's ripe for fight
now?

Give a rouse: here 's, in hell's despite
now,

King Charles!

Who gave me the goods that went since?

Who raised me the house that sank once?

Who helped me to gold I spent since?

Who found me in wine you drank once?

CHORUS.—King Charles, and who'll do
him right now?

King Charles, and who 's ripe
for fight now?

Give a rouse: here 's, in hell's
despite now,

King Charles!

To whom used my boy George quaff else,

By the old fool's side that begot him?

For whom did he cheer and laugh else,

While Noll's damned troopers shot him?

CHORUS.—King Charles, and who'll do
him right now?

King Charles, and who 's ripe
for fight now?

Give a rouse: here 's, in hell's
despite now,

King Charles!

III. BOOT AND SADDLE

Boot, saddle, to horse and away!

Rescue my castle before the hot day

Brightens to blue from its silvery gray.

CHORUS.—Boot, saddle, to horse and
away!

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd
say;

Many 's the friend there, will listen and
pray

"God's luck to gallants that strike up
the lay—

CHORUS.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and
away!"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,
Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Round-
heads' array:

Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by
my fay,

CHORUS.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and
away!"

Who? My wife Gertrude; that, honest
and gay,

Laughs when you talk of surrendering,
"Nay!

I've better counsellors; what counsel
they?

CHO.—Boot, saddle, to horse, and
away!" 1842.

THROUGH THE METIDJA TO ABD- EL-KADR

As I ride, as I ride,
With a full heart for my guide,
So its tide rocks my side,
As I ride, as I ride,
That, as I were double-eyed,
He, in whom our Tribes confide,
Is descried, ways untried,
As I ride, as I ride.

As I ride, as I ride
To our Chief and his Allied,
Who dares chide my heart's pride
As I ride, as I ride?
Or are witnesses denied—
Through the desert waste and wide
Do I glide unespied
As I ride, as I ride?

As I ride, as I ride,
When an inner voice has cried,
The sands slide, nor abide
(As I ride, as I ride)
O'er each visioned homicide
That came vaunting (has he lied?)
To reside—where he died,
As I ride, as I ride.

As I ride, as I ride,
Ne'er has spur my swift horse plied,
Yet his hide, streaked and pied,

As I ride, as I ride,
Shows where sweat has sprung and dried,
—Zebra-footed, ostrich-thighed—
How has vied stride with stride
As I ride, as I ride!

As I ride, as I ride,
Could I loose what Fate has tied,
Ere I pried, she should hide
(As I ride, as I ride)
All that's meant me—satisfied
When the Prophet and the Bride
Stop veins I'd have subside
As I ride, as I ride! 1842.

CRISTINA

SHE should never have looked at me
If she meant I should not love her!
There are plenty . . . men you call such,
I suppose . . . she may discover
All her soul to, if she pleases,
And yet leave much as she found
them:
But I'm not so, and she knew it
When she fixed me, glancing round
them.

What? To fix me thus meant nothing?
But I can't tell (there's my weakness)
What her look said!—no vile cant, sure,
About "need to strew the bleakness
Of some lone shore with its pearl-seed,
That the sea feels"—no "strange
yearning

That such souls have, most to lavish
Where there's chance of least return-
ing."

Oh, we're sunk enough here, God knows!
But not quite so sunk that moments,
Sure though seldom, are denied us,
When the spirit's true endowments
Stand out plainly from its false ones,
And apprise it if pursuing
Or the right way or the wrong way,
To its triumph or undoing.

There are flashes struck from midnights,
There are fire-flames noondays kindle,
Whereby piled up honors perish,
Whereby swollen ambitions dwindle,
While just this or that poor impulse,
Which for once had play unstifled,
Seems the sole work of a lifetime,
That away the rest have trifled.

Doubt you if, in some such moment,
As she fixed me, she felt clearly,
Ages past the soul existed,

Here an age 't is resting merely,
And hence fleets again for ages,
While the true end, sole and single,
It stops here for is, this love-way,
With some other soul to mingle?

Else it loses what it lived for,
And eternally must lose it;
Better ends may be in prospect,
Deeper blisses (if you choose it),
But this life's end and this love-bliss
Have been lost here. Doubt you
whether

This she felt as, looking at me,
Mine and her souls rushed together?

Oh, observe! Of course, next moment,
The world's honors in derision,
Trampled out the light forever:
Never fear but there's provision
Of the devil's to quench knowledge
Lest we walk the earth in rapture!
—Making those who catch God's secret
Just so much more prize their capture!

Such am I: the secret's mine now!
She has lost me, I have gained her;
Her soul's mine: and thus, grown per-
fect,
I shall pass my life's remainder,
Life will just hold out the proving
Both our powers, alone and blended:
And then come the next life quickly!
This world's use will have been ended.
1842.

INCIDENT OF THE FRENCH CAMP

You know, we French stormed Ratis-
bon:

A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming-day;
With neck out-thrust, you fancy how,
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused "My plans
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army-leader Lannes
Waver at yonder wall,"—
Out 'twixt the battery-smokes there
flew

A rider, bound on bound
Full-galloping; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung in smiling joy,
And held himself erect

By just his horse's mane, a boy :
 You hardly could suspect—
 (So tight he kept his lips compressed,
 Scarce any blood came through)
 You looked twice ere you saw his breast
 Was all but shot in two.

"Well," cried he, "Emperor, by God's
 grace
 We've got you Ratisbon !
 The Marshal 's in the market-place,
 And you 'll be there anon
 To see your flag-bird flap his vans
 Where I, to heart's desire,
 Perched him !" The chief's eye flashed ;
 his plans
 Soared up again like fire.

The chief's eye flashed ; but presently
 Softened itself, as sheathes
 A film the mother-eagle's eye
 When her bruised eaglet breathes ;
 "You're wounded !" "Nay," the sol-
 dier's pride
 Touched to the quick, he said :
 "I'm killed, Sire !" And his chief be-
 side,
 Smiling the boy fell dead. 1842.

MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

THAT's my last Duchess painted on the
 wall,
 Looking as if she were alive. I call
 That piece a wonder, now : Frà Pan-
 dolf's hands
 Worked busily a day, and there she
 stands.
 Will 't please you sit and look at her ? I
 said
 "Frà Pandolf" by design, for never
 read
 Strangers like you that pictured coun-
 tenance,
 The depth and passion of its earnest
 glance,
 But to myself they turned (since none
 puts by
 The curtain I have drawn for you, but I)
 And seemed as they would ask me, if
 they durst,
 How such a glance came there ; so, not
 the first
 Are you to turn and ask thus. Sir, 't
 was not
 Her husband's presence only, called that
 spot

Of joy into the Duchess' cheek : perhaps
 Frà Pandolf chanced to say, "Her man-
 tie laps
 Over my lady's wrist too much," or
 "Paint
 Must never hope to reproduce the faint
 Half-flush that dies along her throat :"
 such stuff
 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause
 enough
 For calling up that spot of joy. She had
 A heart—how shall I say?—too soon
 made glad.
 Too easily impressed : she liked whate'er
 She looked on, and her looks went every-
 where.
 Sir, 't was all one ! My favor at her
 breast,
 The dropping of the daylight in the
 West,
 The bough of cherries some officious
 fool
 Broke in the orchard for her, the white
 mule
 She rode with round the terrace—all and
 each
 Would draw from her alike the approv-
 ing speech,
 Or blush, at least. She thanked men,—
 good ! but thanked
 Somehow—I know not how—as if she
 ranked
 My gift of a nine-hundred-years-old
 name
 With anybody's gift. Who 'd stoop to
 blame
 This sort of trifling ? Even had you skill
 In speech—(which I have not)—to make
 your will
 Quite clear to such an one, and say,
 "Just this
 Or that in you disgusts me ; here you
 miss,
 Or there exceed the mark"—and if she
 let
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set
 Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made
 excuse,
 —E'en then would be some stooping ;
 and I choose
 Never to stoop. Oh sir, she smiled, no
 doubt,
 Whene'er I passed her ; but who passed
 without
 Much the same smile ? This grew ; I
 gave commands ;
 Then all smiles stopped together. There
 she stands [I'll meet
 As if alive. Will 't please you rise ? We

The company below, then. I repeat,
The Count your master's known munificence

Is ample warrant that no just pretence
Of mine for dowry will be disallowed ;
Though his fair daughter's self, as I
avowed

At starting, is my object. Nay, we'll go
Together down, sir. Notice Neptune,
though,

Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze
for me ! 1842.

IN A GONDOLA

He sings

I SEND my heart up to thee, all my heart
In this my singing.

For the stars help me, and the sea bears
part ;

The very night is clinging
Closer to Venice' streets to leave one
space

Above me, whence thy face
May light my joyous heart to thee its
dwelling place.

She speaks

Say after me, and try to say
My very words, as if each word
Came from you of your own accord,
In your own voice, in your own way :

"This woman's heart and soul and brain
Are mine as much as this gold chain
She bids me wear ; which " (say again)

"I choose to make by cherishing
A precious thing, or choose to fling
Over the boat-side, ring by ring."
And yet once more say . . . no word
more !

Since words are only words. Give o'er !

Unless you call me, all the same,
Familiarly by my pet name,
Which if the Three should hear you call,
And me reply to, would proclaim
At once our secret to them all.

Ask of me, too, command me, blame,—
Do, break down the partition-wall

'T wixt us, the daylight world beholds
Curtained in dusk and splendid folds !

What's left but—all of me to take ?

I am the Three's : prevent them, slake
Your thirst ! 'T is said, the Arab sage,

In practising with gems, can loose
Their subtle spirit in his cruce

And leave but ashes : so, sweet mage,

Leave them my ashes when thy use
Sucks out my soul, thy heritage !

He sings

Past we glide, and past, and past !

What's that poor Agnese doing
Where they make the shutters fast ?

Gray Zanobi's just a-wooing
To his couch the purchased bride :
Past we glide !

Past we glide, and past, and past !

Why's the Pucci Palace flaring
Like a beacon to the blast ?

Guests by hundreds, not one caring
If the dear host's neck were wried :
Past we glide !

She sings

The moth's kiss, first !

Kiss me as if you made believe
You were not sure, this eve,
How my face, your flower, had pursed
Its petals up ; so, here and there
You brush it, till I grow aware
Who wants me, and wide ope I burst.

The bee's kiss, now !

Kiss me as if you entered gay
My heart at some noonday,
A bud that dares not disallow
The claim, so all is rendered up,
And passively its shattered cup
Over your head to sleep I bow.

He sings

What are we two ?

I am a Jew.

And carry thee, farther than friends
can pursue.

To a feast of our tribe ;

Where they need thee to bribe

The devil that blasts them unless he
imbibe

Thy . . . Scatter the vision forever !
And now,

As of old, I am I, thou art thou !

Say again, what we are ?

The sprite of a star,

I lure thee above where the destinies bar
My plumes their full play

Till a ruddier ray

Than my pale one announce there is
withering away

Some . . . Scatter the vision forever !
And now,

As of old, I am I, thou art thou !

He muses

Oh, which were best, to roam or rest?
 The land's lap or the water's breast?
 To sleep on yellow millet-sheaves,
 Or swim in lucid shallows just
 Eluding water-lily leaves,
 An inch from Death's black fingers,
 thrust
 To lock you, whom release he must;
 Which life were best on Summer eves?

He speaks, musing

Lie back; could thought of mine improve you?
 From this shoulder let there spring
 A wing; from this, another wing;
 Wings, not legs and feet, shall move
 you!
 Snow-white must they spring, to blend
 With your flesh, but I intend
 They shall deepen to the end,
 Broader, into burning gold,
 Till both wings crescent-wise enfold
 Your perfect self, from 'neath your feet
 To o'er your head, where, lo, they meet
 As if a million sword-blades hurled
 Defiance from you to the world!

Rescue me thou, the only real!
 And scare away this mad ideal
 That came, nor motions to depart!
 Thanks! Now, stay ever as thou art!

Still he muses

What if the Three should catch at last
 Thy serenader? While there's cast
 Paul's cloak about my head, and fast
 Gian pinions me, Himself has past
 His styler through my back; I reel;
 And . . . is it thou I feel?

They trail me, these three godless knaves,
 Past every church that saints and saves,
 Nor stop till, where the cold sea raves
 By Lido's wet accursed graves,
 They scoop mine, roll me to its brink,
 And . . . on thy breast I sink!

She replies, musing.

Dip your arm o'er the boat-side, elbow-deep,
 As I do: thus: were death so unlike
 sleep,
 Caught this way? Death's to fear from
 flame or steel,
 Or poison doubtless; but from water—
 feel!

Go find the bottom! Would you stay
 me? There! [grass
 Now pluck a great blade of that ribbon-
 To plait in where the foolish jewel was,
 I flung away: since you have praised
 my hair,
 'T is proper to be choice in what I wear.

He speaks

Row home? must we row home? Too
 surely

Know I where its front's demurely
 Over the Giudecca piled;
 Window just with window mating,
 Door on door exactly waiting,
 All's the set face of a child:
 But behind it, where's a trace
 Of the staidness and reserve,
 And formal lines without a curve,
 In the same child's playing-face?
 No two windows look one way
 O'er the small sea-water thread
 Below them. Ah, the autumn day
 I, passing, saw you overhead!
 First, out a cloud of curtain blew,
 Then a sweet cry, and last came you—
 To catch your lory that must needs
 Escape just then, of all times then,
 To peck a tall plant's fleecy seeds,
 And make me happiest of men.
 I scarce could breathe to see you reach
 So far back o'er the balcony
 To catch him ere he climbed too high
 Above you in the Smyrna peach,
 That quick the round smooth cord of
 gold,

This coiled hair on your head, unrolled,
 Fell down you like a gorgeous snake
 The Roman girls were wont, of old,
 When Rome there was, for coolness's sake
 To let lie curling o'er their bosoms.
 Dear lory, may his beak retain
 Ever its delicate rose stain
 As if the wounded lotus-blossoms
 Had marked their thief to know again!

Stay longer yet, for others' sake
 Than mine! What should your chamber
 do?

—With all its rarities that ache
 In silence while day lasts, but wake
 At night-time and their life renew,
 Suspended just to pleasure you
 Who brought against their will together
 These objects, and, while day lasts,
 weave

Around them such a magic tether
 That dumb they look: your harp, believe,

With all the sensitive tight strings
Which dare not speak, now to itself
Breathes slumberously, as if some elf

Went in and out the chords, his wings
Make murmur wheresoe'er they graze,
As an angel may, between the maze
Of midnight palace-pillars, on
And on, to sow God's plagues, have gone
Through guilty glorious Babylon.
And while such murmurs flow, the
nymph

Bends o'er the harp-top from her shell
As the dry limpet for the lymph
Come with a tune he knows so well.
And how your statues' hearts must
swell!

And how your pictures must descend
To see each other, friend with friend!
Oh, could you take them by surprise,
You'd find Schidone's eager Duke
Doing the quaintest courtesies
To that prim saint by Haste-thee-Luke!
And, deeper into her rock den,
Bold Castelfranco's Magdalen
You'd find retreated from the ken
Of that robed counsel-keeping Ser—
As if the Tizian thinks of her,
And is not, rather, gravely bent
On seeing for himself what toys
Are these, his progeny invent,
What litter now the board employs
Whereon he signed a document
That got him murdered! Each enjoys
Its night so well, you cannot break
The sport up, so, indeed must make
More stay with me, for others' sake.

She speaks

To-morrow, if a harp-string, say,
Is used to tie the jasmine back
That overfloods my room with sweets,
Contrive your Zorzi somehow meets
My Zanze! If the ribbon's black,
The Three are watching: keep away!

Your gondola—let Zorzi wreathe
A mesh of water-weeds about
Its prow, as if he unaware
Had struck some quay or bridge-foot
stair!

That I may throw a paper out
As you and he go underneath.

There's Zanze's vigilant taper; safe are
we.

Only one minute more to-night with
Resume your past self of a month ago!
Be you the bashful gallant, I will be

The lady with the colder breast than
snow.

Now bow you, as becomes, nor touch
my hand

More than I touch yours when I step to
land,

And say, "All thanks, Siora!"—

Heart to heart
And lips to lips! Yet once more, ere
we part,

Clasp me and make me thine, as mine
thou art!

[*He is surprised, and stabbed.*

It was ordained to be so, sweet!—and
best

Comes now, beneath thine eyes, upon
thy breast.

Still kiss me! Care not for the cowards!
Care

Only to put aside thy beauteous hair
My blood will hurt! The Three, I do
not scorn

To death, because they never lived: but I
Have lived indeed, and so—(yet one
more kiss)—can die! 1842.

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

A CHILD'S STORY

(Written for, and inscribed to, W. M.
the Younger.)¹

I

HAMELIN Town 's in Brunswick,
By famous Hanover city;
The river Weser, deep and wide,
Washes its wall on the southern side;
A pleasanter spot you never spied;
But, when begins my ditty,
Almost five hundred years ago,
To see the townsfolk suffer so
From vermin, was a pity.

II

Rats!
They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
And bit the babies in the cradles,
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
And licked the soup from the cooks'
own ladles,
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
And even spoiled the women's chats
By drowning their speaking
With shrieking and squeaking
In fifty different sharps and flats.

¹ The son of William Macready, the famous actor.

III

At last the people in a body
To the Town Hall came flocking :
" 'T is clear," cried they, "our Mayor 's
a noddie ;

And as for our Corporation—shocking
To think we buy gowns lined with
ermine

For dolts that can't or won't determine
What 's best to rid us of our vermin !
You hope, because you 're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease ?
Rouse up, sirs ! Give your brains a rack-
ing

To find the remedy we 're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we 'll send you pack-
ing ! "

At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

IV

An hour they sat in council ;

At length the Mayor broke silence :
" For a guildler I 'd my ermine gown
sell,

I wish I were a mile hence !
It 's easy to bid one rack one's brain—
I 'm sure my poor head aches again,
I 've scratched it so, and all in vain.
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap ! "
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber-door but a gentle tap ?
" Bless us," cried the Mayor, " what 's
that ? "

(With the Corporation as he sat,
Looking little though wondrous fat ;
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister
Than a too-long-opened oyster,
Save when at noon his paunch grew
mutinous

For a plate of turtle green and glutinous)
" Only a scraping of shoes on the mat ?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat ! "

V

" Come in ! "—the Mayor cried, looking
bigger :

And in did come the strangest figure !
His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red,
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in ;
There was no guessing his kith and kin :
And nobody could enough admire

The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one : " It 's as my great-grand-
sire,

Starting up at the Trump of Doom's
tone.

Ead walked this way from his painted
tombstone ! "

VI

He advanced to the council-table ;
And, " Please your honors," said he,
" I 'm able,

By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep or swim or fly or run,
After me so as you never saw !
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole and toad and newt and viper ;
And people call me the Pied Piper."

(And here they noticed round his neck
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match with his coat of the self-same
check ;

And at the scarf's end hung a pipe ;
And his fingers, they noticed, were ever
straying

As if impatient to be playing
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)

" Yet," said he, " poor piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham,
Last June, from his huge swarms of
gnats ;

I eased in Asia the Nizam
Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats :
And as for what your brain bewilders,
If I can rid your town of rats
Will you give me a thousand guilders ? "
" One? fifty thousand ! "—was the ex-
clamation

Of the astonished Mayor and Corpora-
tion.

VII

Into the street the Piper stepped,

Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic sleight

In his quiet pipe the while ;
Then, like a musical adept,
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,
And green and blue his sharp eyes
twinkled,

Like a candle-flame where salt is
sprinkled ;

And ere three shrill notes the pipe
uttered,

You heard as if an army muttered ;
And the muttering grew to a grumbling ;

And the grumbling grew to a mighty
rumbling;
And out of the houses the rats came
tumbling.

Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny
rats,

Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny
rats,

Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,

Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,

Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,

Families by tens and dozens,

Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—

Followed the Piper for their lives.

From street to street he piped advanc-
ing,

And step for step they followed dancing,

Until they came to the river Weser,

Wherein all plunged and perished!

—Save one who, stout as Julius Cæsar,

Swam across and lived to carry

(As he, the manuscript he cherished)

To Rat-land home his commentary:

Which was, "At the first shrill notes of
the pipe,

I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,

And putting apples, wondrous ripe,

Into a cider-press's gripe:

And a moving away of pickle-tub-boards,

And a leaving ajar of conserve-cup-
boards,

And a drawing the corks of train-oil-
flasks,

And a breaking the hoops of butter-
casks:

And it seemed as if a voice

(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery

Is breathed) called out, 'Oh rats, re-
joice!

The world is grown to one vast dry-
saltery!

So munch on, crunch on, take your
nunccheon,

Breakfast, supper, dinner, luncheon!'

And just as a bulky sugar puncheon,

All ready staved, like a great sun shone

Glorious scarce an inch before me,

Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore
me!'

—I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

VIII

You should have heard the Hamelin
people

Ring the bells till they rocked the
steeple.

"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long
poles,

Poke out the nests and block up the

Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats!"—when suddenly, up the
face

Of the Piper perked in the market-place,
With a, "First, if you please, my thou-
sand guilders!"

IX

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked
blue;

So did the Corporation too.

For council dinners made rare havoc

With Claret, Moselle, Vin-de-Grave,

Hock;

And half the money would replenish

Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.

To pay this sum to a wandering fellow

With a gypsy coat of red and yellow!

"Beside," quoth the Mayor with a
knowing wink,

"Our business was done at the river's
brink;

We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I
think.

So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink

From the duty of giving you something
for drink,

And a matter of money to put in your
poke;

But as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in
joke.

Beside, our losses have made us thrifty.
A thousand guilders. Come, take fifty!"

X

The Piper's face fell, and he cried,

"No trifling! I can't wait, beside!

I've promised to visit by dinner time

Bagdad, and accept the prime

Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's
rich in.

For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,

Of a nest of scorpions no survivor:

With him I proved no bargain-driver,

With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!

And folks who put me in a passion

May find me pipe after another fashion."

XI

"How?" cried the Mayor, "d'ye think
I brook

Being worse treated than a Cook?

Insulted by a lazy ribald

With idle pipe and vesture piebald?

You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst

Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

XII

Once more he stepped into the street,
 And to his lips again
 Laid his long pipe of smooth straight
 cane ;
 And ere he blew three notes (such
 sweet
 Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
 Never gave the enraptured air)
 There was a rustling that seemed like a
 bustling
 Of merry crowds justling at pitching
 and hustling ;
 Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes
 clattering,
 Little hands clapping and little tongues
 chattering,
 And, like fowls in a farm-yard when
 barley is scattering,
 Out came the children running.
 All the little boys and girls,
 With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,
 And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,
 Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after
 The wonderful music with shouting and
 laughter.

XIII

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council
 stood
 As if they were changed into blocks of
 wood,
 Unable to move a step, or cry
 To the children merrily skipping by,
 —Could only follow with the eye
 That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.
 But how the Mayor was on the rack,
 And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,
 As the Piper turned from the High Street
 To where the Weser rolled its waters
 Right in the way of their sons and daugh-
 ters !
 However, he turned from South to West,
 And to Koppelberg Hill his steps ad-
 dressed,
 And after him the children pressed ;
 Great was the joy in every breast.
 "He never can cross that mighty top !
 He's forced to let the piping drop,
 And we shall see our children stop !"
 When, lo, as they reached the mountain-
 side,
 A wondrous portal opened wide.
 As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed ;
 And the Piper advanced and the children
 followed,
 And when all were in to the very last,
 The door in the mountain-side shut fast.

Did I say all ? No ! One was lame,
 And could not dance the whole of the
 way ;

And in after years if you would blame
 His sadness, he was used to say,—
 "It's dull in our town since my play-
 mates left !

I can't forget that I'm bereft
 Of all the pleasant sights they see,
 Which the Piper also promised me.
 For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
 Joining the town and just at hand,
 Where waters gushed and fruit-trees
 grew

And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
 And everything was strange and new ;
 The sparrows were brighter than pea-
 cocks here,

And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
 And honey-bees had lost their stings,
 And horses were born with eagles'
 wings ;

And just as I became assured
 My lame foot would be speedily cured,
 The music stopped and I stood still,
 And found myself outside the hill,
 Left alone against my will,
 To go now limping as before,
 And never hear of that country more !"

XIV

Alas, alas for Hamelin !

There came into many a burgher's pate
 A text which says that heaven's gate
 Opens to the rich at as easy rate
 As the needle's eye takes a camel in !
 The Mayor sent East, West, North and
 South,

To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,
 Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
 Silver and gold to his heart's content,
 If he'd only return the way he went,
 And bring the children behind him.

But when they saw 't was a lost en-
 deavor,
 And Piper and dancers were gone for-
 ever,

They made a decree that lawyers never
 Should think their records dated duly
 If, after the day of the month and year,
 These words did not as well appear,
 "And so long after what happened here
 On the Twenty-second of July,
 Thirteen hundred and seventy-six :"
 And the better in memory to fix
 The place of the children's last retreat,
 They called it, the Pied Piper's Street—
 Where any one playing on pipe or tabor
 Was sure for the future to lose his labor

Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern
 To shock with mirth a street so
 solemn ;
 But opposite the place of the cavern
 They wrote the story on a column.
 And on the great church-window painted
 The same, to make the world acquainted
 How their children were stolen away,
 And there it stands to this very day.
 And I must not omit to say
 That in Transylvania there 's a tribe
 Of alien people who ascribe
 The outlandish ways and dress
 On which their neighbors lay such stress,
 To their fathers and mothers having
 risen
 Out of some subterranean prison
 Into which they were trepanned
 Long time ago in a mighty band
 Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
 But how or why, they don't understand.

XV

So, Willy, let me and you be wipers
 Of scores out with all men—especially
 pipers !
 And, whether they pipe us free from rats
 or from mice,
 If we've promised them aught, let us
 keep our promise ! 1842.

RUDEL TO THE LADY OF TRIPOLI

I KNOW a Mount, the gracious Sun per-
 ceives
 First, when he visits, last, too, when he
 leaves
 The world ; and, vainly favored, it repays
 The day-long glory of his steadfast gaze
 By no change of its large calm front of
 snow.
 And underneath the Mount, a Flower I
 know,
 He cannot have perceived, that changes
 ever
 At his approach ; and, in the lost en-
 deavor
 To live his life, has parted, one by one.
 With all a flower's true graces, for the
 grace
 Of being but a foolish mimic sun,
 With ray-like florets round a disk-like
 face.
 Men nobly call by many a name the
 Mount
 As over many a land of theirs its large
 Calm front of snow like a triumphal
 targe

Is reared, and still with old names, fresh
 names vie,
 Each to its proper praise and owe
 account :
 Men call the Flower the Sunflower,
 sportively.

II

Oh, Angel of the East, one, one gold look
 Across the waters to this twilight nook,
 —The far sad waters, Angel, to this
 nook !

III

Dear Pilgrim, art thou for the East in-
 deed ?
 Go !—saying ever as thou dost proceed,
 That I, French Rudel, choose for my
 device
 A sunflower outspread like a sacrifice
 Before its idol. See ! These inexpert
 And hurried fingers could not fail to
 hurt
 The woven picture ; 't is a woman's skill
 Indeed ; but nothing baffled me, so, ill
 Or well, the work is finished. Say, men
 feed
 On songs I sing, and therefore bask the
 bees
 On my flower's breast as on a platform
 broad :
 But as the flower's concern is not for
 these
 But solely for the sun, so men applaud
 In vain this Rudel, he not looking here
 But to the East—the East ! Go, say this,
 Pilgrim dear ! 1842.

THERE'S A WOMAN LIKE A DEW-
 DROP

[FROM A BLOT IN THE SCUTCHEON]

THERE 's a woman like a dewdrop, she 's
 so purer than the purest ;
 And her noble heart 's the noblest, yes,
 and her sure faith 's the surest :
 And her eyes are dark and humid, like
 the depth on depth of lustre
 Hid i' the harebell, while her tresses, sun-
 nier than the wild-grape cluster,
 Gush in golden-tinted plenty down her
 neck's rose-misted marble :
 Then her voice's music . . . call it the
 well's bubbling, the bird's warble !
 And this woman says, " My days were
 sunless and my nights were moon-
 less,

Parched the pleasant April herbage, and
 the lark's heart's outbreak tuneless,
 If you loved me not!" And I who—(ah,
 for words of flame!) adore her,
 Who am mad to lay my spirit prostrate
 palpably before her—
 I may enter at her portal soon, as now
 her lattice takes me,
 And by noontide as by midnight make
 her mine, as hers she makes
 me! 1843.

THE LOST LEADER¹

JUST for a handful of silver he left us,
 Just for a riband to stick in his coat—
 Found the one gift of which fortune be-
 reft us,
 Lost all the others she lets us devote;
 They, with the gold to give, doled him
 out silver,
 So much was theirs who so little al-
 lowed:
 How all our copper had gone for his
 service!
 Rags—were they purple, his heart had
 been proud!

¹ Browning admitted that in writing this poem he had Wordsworth in mind, but insisted that he did not mean it as an exact portrait of Wordsworth. Browning's mature judgment on the matter is best expressed in his own words: "I did in my hasty youth presume to use the great and venerated personality of Wordsworth as a sort of painter's model; one from which this or the other particular feature may be selected and turned to account; had I intended more, above all, such a boldness as portraying the entire man, I should not have talked about 'handfuls of silver and bits of ribbon.' These never influenced the change of politics in the great poet, whose defection, nevertheless, accompanied as it was by a regular face-about of his special party, was to my juvenile apprehension, and even mature consideration, an event to deplore." See also Mrs. Orr's Browning (*Life and Letters*), I, 191. Compare Shelley's early Sonnet

TO WORDSWORTH

POET of Nature, thou hast wept to know
 That things depart which never may return:
 Childhood and youth, friendship and love's first
 glow.

Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to
 mourn.

These common woes I feel. One loss is mine
 Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone deplore.
 Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine
 On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar:
 Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood
 Above the blind and battling multitude:
 In honored poverty thy voice did weave
 Songs consecrate to truth and liberty,—
 Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,
 Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to
 be. 1815. 1816.

We that had loved him so, followed him,
 honored him,
 Lived in his mild and magnificent
 eye,
 Learned his great language, caught his
 clear accents,
 Made him our pattern to live and to
 die!
 Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for
 us,
 Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they
 watch from their graves!
 He alone breaks from the van and the
 freemen,
 —He alone sinks to the rear and the
 slaves!
 We shall march prospering,—not
 through his presence;
 Songs may inspirit us,—not from his
 lyre;
 Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his
 quiescence,
 Still bidding crouch whom the rest
 bade aspire:
 Blot out his name, then, record one lost
 soul more,
 One task more declined, one more
 footpath untrod,
 One more devils'-triumph and sorrow for
 angels,
 One wrong more to man, one more in-
 sult to God!
 Life's night begins: let him never come
 back to us!
 There would be doubt, hesitation and
 pain,
 Forced praise on our part—the glimmer
 of twilight,
 Never glad confident morning again!
 Best fight on well, for we taught him—
 strike gallantly.
 Menace our heart ere we master his
 own;
 Then let him receive the new knowledge
 and wait us,
 Pardoned in heaven, the first by the
 throne! 1845.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX¹

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and
 he;
 I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped
 all three;

¹ This galloping ballad, which has no historical foundation, was written at sea, off Cape St. Vincent. See Mrs. Orr's Browning, I, 144-45.

"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the
gatebolts undrew;
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us gallop-
ing through;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank
to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped
abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the
great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never
changing our place;
I turned in my saddle and made its
girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the
pique right,
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained
slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'T was moonset at starting; but while
we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight
dawned clear;
At Boom, a great yellow star came out
to see;
At Düffeld, 't was morning as plain as
could be;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we
heard the half-chime,
So Joris broke silence with, "Yet there
is time!"

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the
sun,
And against him the cattle stood black
every one, [ing past,
To stare through the mist at us gallop-
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at
last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting
away
The haze, as some bluff river headland
its spray:

And his low head and crest, just one
sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out
on his track;
And one eye's black intelligence,—ever
that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own
master, askance!
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which
aye and anon [ing on.
His fierce lips shook upwards in gallop-

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried
Joris, "Stay spur!

Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault 's
not in her.
We 'll remember at Aix"—for one heard
the quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and
staggering knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the
flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered
and sank.

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in
the sky; [laugh.
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright
stubble like chaff;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang
white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is
in sight!"

"How they 'll greet us!"—and all in a
moment his roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as
a stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the
whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix
from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to
the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-
sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each hol-
ster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt
and all, [his ear,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse
without peer;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang,
any noise, bad or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped
and stood.

And all I remember is—friends flocking
round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees
on the ground;
And no voice but was praising this Rol-
and of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last
measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common
consent)
Was no more than his due who brought
good news from Ghent.

1838. 1845.

EARTH'S IMMORTALITIES

FAME

SEE, as the prettiest graves will do in
time,
Our poet's wants the freshness of its
prime;
Spite of the sexton's browsing horse, the
sods
Have struggled through its binding osier
rods;
Headstone and half-sunk footstone lean
awry,
Wanting the brick-work promised by-
and-by;
How the minute gray lichens, plate o'er
plate,
Have softened down the crisp-cut name
and date!

LOVE

So, the year 's done with!
(*Love me forever!*)
All March begun with,
April's endeavor;
May-wreaths that bound me
June needs must sever;
Now snows fall round me,
Quenching June's fever—
(*Love me forever!*) 1845.

MEETING AT NIGHT

THE gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys
and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!
1845.

PARTING AT MORNING

ROUND the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's
rim:
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me.
1845.

SONG

NAY but you, who do not love her,
Is she not pure gold, my mistress?
Holds earth aught—speak truth—above
her?
Aught like this tress, see, and this tress,
And this last fairest tress of all,
So fair, see, ere I let it fall?
Because you spend your lives in praising;
To praise, you search the wide world
over:
Then why not witness, calmly gazing,
If earth holds aught—speak truth—
above her?
Above this tress, and this, I touch
But cannot praise, I love so much!
1845.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM ABROAD

OH, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brush-
wood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard
bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the
swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in
the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the
clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent
spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each
song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could re-
capture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with
hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes
anew
The buttercups, the little children's
dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-
flower!
1845.

HOME-THOUGHTS, FROM THE SEA

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the
Northwest died away;

Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking
 into Cadiz Bay ;
 Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in
 face Trafalgar lay ;
 In the dimmest Northeast distance
 dawned Gibraltar grand and gray ;
 " Here and here did England help me :
 how can I help England ? "—say,

Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to
 God to praise and pray,
 While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent
 over Africa. 1838. 1845.

W

TIME'S REVENGES

I 'VE a Friend, over the sea ;
 I like him, but he loves me.
 It all grew out of the books I write ;
 They find such favor in his sight
 That he slaughters you with savage looks
 Because you don't admire my books.
 He does himself though,—and if some
 vein

Were to snap to-night in this heavy
 brain,

To-morrow month, if I lived to try,
 Round should I just turn quietly,
 Or out of the bedclothes stretch my hand
 Till I found him, come from his foreign
 land

To be my nurse in this poor place,
 And make my broth and wash my face
 And light my fire and, all the while,
 Bear with his old good-humored smile
 That I told him " Better have kept away
 Than come and kill me, night and day,
 With, worse than fever throbs and
 shoots,

The creaking of his clumsy boots."
 I am as sure that this he would do,
 As that Saint Paul's is striking two.
 And I think I rather . . . woe is me !

—Yes, rather should see him than not
 see,

If lifting a hand could seat him there
 Before me in the empty chair
 To-night, when my head aches indeed,
 And I can neither think nor read,
 Nor make these purple fingers hold
 The pen ; this garret's freezing cold !

And I've a Lady—there he wakes,
 The laughing fiend and prince of snakes
 Within me, at her name, to pray
 Fate send some creature in the way
 Of my love for her, to be down-torn,
 Upthrust and outward-borne.

So I might prove myself that sea
 Of passion which I needs must be !
 Call my thoughts false and my fancies
 quaint

And my style infirm and its figures faint,
 All the critics say and more blame yet,
 And not one angry word you get.
 But, please you, wonder I would put
 My cheek beneath that lady's foot
 Rather than trample under mine
 The laurels of the Florentine,
 And you shall see how the devil spends
 A fire God gave for other ends !
 I tell you, I ride up and down
 This garret, crowned with love's best
 crown,

And feasted with love's perfect feast,
 To think I kill for her, at least,
 Body and soul and peace and fame,
 Alike youth's end and manhood's aim,
 —So is my spirit, as flesh with sin,
 Filled full, eaten out and in
 With the face of her, the eyes of her,
 The lips, the little chin, the stir
 Of shadow round her mouth ; and she
 —I 'll tell you—calmly would decree
 That I should roast at a slow fire,
 If that would compass her desire
 And make her one whom they invite
 To the famous ball to-morrow night.

There may be heaven ; there must be
 hell ;

Meantime, there is our earth here—
 well ! 1845.

THE ITALIAN IN ENGLAND

THAT second time they hunted me
 From hill to plain, from shore to sea,
 And Austria, hounding far and wide
 Her blood-hounds through the country-
 side,

Breathed hot and instant on my trace,—
 I made six days a hiding-place
 Of that dry green old aqueduct
 Where I and Charles, when boys, have
 plucked

The fire-flies from the roof above,
 Bright creeping through the moss they
 love :

—How long it seems since Charles was
 lost !

Six days the soldiers crossed and crossed
 The country in my very sight ;
 And when that peril ceased at night,
 The sky broke out in red dismay
 With signal fires ; well, there I lay
 Close covered o'er in my recess,

Up to the neck in ferns and cress,
Thinking on Metternich our friend,
And Charles's miserable end,
And much beside, two days; the third,
Hunger o'ercame me when I heard
The peasants from the village go
To work among the maize; you know,
With us in Lombardy, they bring
Provisions packed on mules, a string
With little bells that cheer their task,
And casks, and boughs on every cask
To keep the sun's heat from the wine;
These I let pass in jingling line,
And, close on them, dear noisy crew,
The peasants from the village, too;
For at the very rear would troop
Their wives and sisters in a group
To help, I knew. When these had
passed,

I threw my glove to strike the last,
Taking the chance: she did not start,
Much less cry out, but stooped apart,
One instant rapidly glanced round,
And saw me beckon from the ground;
A wild bush grows and hides my crypt:
She picked my glove up while she
stripped

A branch off, then rejoined the rest
With that; my glove lay in her breast.
Then I drew breath: they disappeared:
It was for Italy I feared.

An hour, and she returned alone
Exactly where my glove was thrown.
Meanwhile came many thoughts; on me
Rested the hopes of Italy;
I had devised a certain tale
Which, when 't was told her, could not
fail

Persuade a peasant of its truth;
I meant to call a freak of youth
This hiding, and give hopes of pay,
And no temptation to betray.
But when I saw that woman's face,
Its calm simplicity of grace,
Our Italy's own attitude
In which she walked thus far, and stood,
Planting each naked foot so firm,
To crush the snake and spare the worm—
At first sight of her eyes, I said,
"I am that man upon whose head
They fix the price, because I hate
The Austrians over us: the State
Will give you gold—oh, gold so much!—
If you betray me to their clutch,
And be your death, for aught I know,
If once they find you saved their foe.
Now, you must bring me food and drink,
And also paper, pen and ink,

And carry safe what I shall write
To Padua, which you'll reach at night
Before the duomo shuts; go in,
And wait till Tenebræ begin;
Walk to the third confessional,
Between the pillar and the wall,
And kneeling whisper, *Whence comes
peace?*

Say it a second time, then cease;
And if the voice inside returns,
*From Christ and Freedom; what concerns
The cause of Peace?*—for answer, slip
My letter where you placed your lip;
Then come back happy we have done
Our mother service—I, the son,
As you the daughter of our land!"

Three mornings more, she took her
stand

In the same place, with the same eyes:
I was no surer of sunrise
Than of her coming. We conferred
Of her own prospects, and I heard
She had a lover—stout and tall,
She said—then let her eyelids fall,
"He could do much"—as if some doubt
Entered her heart,—then, passing out,
"She could not speak for others, who
Had other thoughts; herself she knew:"
And so she brought me drink and food.
After four days, the scouts pursued
Another path; at last arrived
The help my Paduan friends contrived
To furnish me: she brought the news.
For the first time I could not choose
But kiss her hand, and lay my own
Upon her head—"This faith was shown
To Italy, our mother; she
Uses my hand and blesses thee."
She followed down to the sea-shore;
I left and never saw her more.

How very long since I have thought
Concerning—much less wished for—
aught

Beside the good of Italy,
For which I live and mean to die!
I never was in love; and since
Charles proved false, what shall now
convince

My inmost heart I have a friend?
However, if I pleased to spend
Real wishes on myself—say, three—
I know at least what one should be.
I would grasp Metternich until
I felt his red wet throat distil
In blood through these two hands. And
next

--Nor much for that am I perplexed—

Charles, perjured traitor, for his part,
Should die slow of a broken heart
Under his new employers. Last
—Ah, there, what should I wish? For
fast

Do I grow old and out of strength.
If I resolved to seek at length
My father's house again, how scared
They all would look, and unprepared!
My brothers live in Austria's pay
—Disowned me long ago, men say;
And all my early mates who used
To praise me so—perhaps induced
More than one early step of mine—
Are turning wise: while some opine
"Freedom grows licence," some suspect
"Haste breeds delay," and recollect
They always said, such premature
Beginnings never could endure!
So, with a sullen "All's for best,"
The land seems settling to its rest.
I think then, I should wish to stand
This evening in that dear, lost land,
Over the sea the thousand miles,
And know if yet that woman smiles
With the calm smile; some little farm
She lives in there, no doubt: what harm
If I sat on the door-side bench,
And, while her spindle made a trench
Fantastically in the dust,
Inquired of all her fortunes—just
Her children's ages and their names,
And what may be the husband's aims
For each of them. I'd talk this out,
And sit there, for an hour about,
Then kiss her hand once more, and lay
Mine on her head, and go my way.

So much for idle wishing—how
It steals the time! To business now.
1845.

PICTOR IGNOTUS

FLORENCE, 15—

I COULD have painted pictures like that
youth's
Ye praise so. How my soul springs
up! No bar
Stayed me—ah, thought which saddens
while it soothes!
—Never did fate forbid me, star by
star,
To outburst on your night with all my
gift
Of fires from God: nor would my flesh
have shrunk
From seconding my soul, with eyes up-
lift

And wide to heaven, or, straight like
thunder, sunk

To the centre, of an instant; or around
Turned calmly and inquisitive, to scan
The license and the limit, space and
bound,

Allowed to truth made visible in man.
And, like that youth ye praise so, all I
saw,

Over the canvas could my hand have
flung,

Each face obedient to its passion's law,
Each passion clear proclaimed with-
out a tongue;

Whether Hope rose at once in all the
blood,

A-tiptoe for the blessing of embrace,
Or Rapture drooped the eyes, as when
her brood

Pull down the nesting dove's heart to
its place;

Or Confidence lit swift the forehead up,
And locked the mouth fast, like a
castle braved,—

O human faces, hath it spilt, my cup?
What did ye give me that I have not
saved?

Nor will I say I have not dreamed (how
well!)

Of going—I, in each new picture,—
forth,

As, making new hearts beat and bosoms
swell,

To Pope or Kaiser, East, West, South,
or North,

Bound for the calmly satisfied great
State,

Or glad aspiring little burgh, it went,
Flowers cast upon the car which bore
the freight,

Through old streets named afresh from
the event,

Till it reached home, where learned age
should greet

My face, and youth, the star not yet
distinct

Above his hair, lie learning at my feet!—
Oh, thus to live, I and my picture,
linked

With love about, and praise, till life
should end,

And then not go to heaven, but linger
here,

Here on my earth, earth's every man
my friend,—

The thought grew frightful, 't was so
wildly dear!

But a voice changed it. Glimpses of
such sights

Have scared me, like the revels
through a door
Of some strange house of idols at its
rites!

This world seemed not the world it
was before :

Mixed with my loving trusting ones,
there trooped

... Who summoned those cold faces
that begun

To press on me and judge me? Though
I stooped

Shrinking, as from the soldiery a
nun,

They drew me forth, and spite of me. . .
enough!

These buy and sell our pictures, take
and give,

Count them for garniture and household-
stuff,

And where they live needs must our
pictures live

And see their faces, listen to their
prate,

Partakers of their daily pettiness,
Discussed of,—“This I love, or this I
hate,

This likes me more, and this affects
me less!”

Wherefore I chose my portion. If at
whiles

My heart sinks, as monotonous I paint
These endless cloisters and eternal aisles

With the same series, Virgin, Babe
and Saint,

With the same cold calm beautiful
regard,—

At least no merchant traffics in my
heart;

The sanctuary's gloom at least shall
ward

Vain tongues from where my pictures
stand apart :

Only prayer breaks the silence of the
shrine

While, blackening in the daily candle-
smoke,

They moulder on the damp wall's
travertine,

'Mid echoes the light footstep never
woke.

So, die my pictures! surely, gently
die!

O youth, men praise so,—holds their
praise its worth?

Blown harshly, keeps the trump its
golden cry?

Tastes sweet the water with such
specks of earth? 1845.

THE BISHOP ORDERS HIS TOMB W AT SAINT PRAXED'S CHURCH.

ROME, 15—

VANITY, saith the preacher, vanity!
Draw round my bed: is Anselm keep-
ing back?

Nephews—sons mine . . . ah God, I
know not! Well—

She, men would have to be your mother
once,

Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!
What's done is done, and she is dead

beside,
Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,

And as she died so must we die our-
selves,

And thence ye may perceive the world
's a dream.

Life, how and what is it? As here I lie
In this state-chamber, dying by degrees,

Hours and long hours in the dead night,
I ask

“Do I live, am I dead?” Peace, peace
seems all.

Saint Praxed's ever was the church for
peace;

And so, about this tomb of mine. I
fought

With tooth and nail to save my niche,
ye know :

—Old Gandolf cozened me, despite my
care ;

Shrewd was that snatch from out the
corner South

He graced his carrion with, God curse
the same!

Yet still my niche is not so cramped but
thence

One sees the pulpit o' the epistle-side,
And somewhat of the choir, those silent

seats,
And up into the very dome where live

The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to
lurk :

And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,

With those nine columns round me,
two and two,

The odd one at my feet where Anselm
stands :

Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the
ripe

As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty
pulse.

—Old Gandolf with his paltry onion-
stone, [peach,

Put me where I may look at him! True

Losy and flawless: how I earned the
 prize!
 Draw close: that conflagration of my
 church
 —What then? So much was saved if
 aught were missed!
 My sons, ye would not be my death?
 Go dig
 The white-grape vineyard where the oil-
 press stood,
 Drop water gently till the surface sink,
 And if ye find . . . Ah God, I know
 not, I! . . .
 Bedded in store of rotten fig-leaves soft,
 And corded up in a tight olive-frail,
 Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,
 Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,
 Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast.
 Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas,
 all,
 That brave Frascati villa with its bath,
 So, let the blue lump poise between my
 knees,
 Like God the Father's globe on both his
 hands
 Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,
 For Gandolf shall not choose but see and
 burst!
 Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our
 years:
 Man goeth to the grave, and where is
 he?
 Did I say basalt for my slab, sons?
 Black—
 'T was ever antique-black I meant! How
 else
 Shall ye contrast my frieze to come
 beneath?
 The bas-relief in bronze ye promised me.
 Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and
 perchance
 Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
 The Saviour at his sermon on the mount,
 Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan
 Ready to twitch the Nymph's last gar-
 ment off,
 And Moses with the tables . . . but I
 know
 Ye mark me not! What do they whisper
 thee,
 Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye
 hope
 To revel down my villas while I gasp
 Bricked o'er with beggar's mouldy tra-
 vertine
 Which Gandolf from his tomb-top
 chuckles at!
 Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper,
 then!

'T is jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I
 grieve.
 My bath must needs be left behind,
 alas!
 One block, pure green as a pistachio-
 nut,
 There 's plenty jasper somewhere in the
 world—
 And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to
 pray
 Horses for ye, and brown Greek manu-
 scripts,
 And mistresses with great smooth mar-
 bly limbs?
 —That 's if ye carve my epitaph aright.
 Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's
 every word,
 No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second
 line—
 Tully, my masters? Ulpian serves his
 need!
 And then how I shall lie through cen-
 turies,
 And hear the blessed mutter of the mass,
 And see God made and eaten all day
 long,
 And feel the steady candle-flame, and
 taste
 Good strong thick stupefying incense-
 smoke!
 For as I lie here, hours of the dead night,
 Dying in state and by such slow degrees,
 I fold my arms as if they clasped a
 crook,
 And stretch my feet forth straight as
 stone can point,
 And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth,
 drop
 Into great laps and folds of sculptor's-
 work:
 And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange
 thoughts
 Grow, with a certain humming in my
 ears,
 About the life before I lived this life,
 And this life too, popes, cardinals and
 priests,
 Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount,
 Your tall pale mother with her talking
 eyes,
 And new-found agate urns as fresh as
 day,
 And marble's language, Latin pure, dis-
 creet,
 —Aha, ELUCESCEBAT quoth our friend?
 No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best!
 Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage.
 All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope
 My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?

Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,
They glitter like your mother's for my soul,

Or ye would heighten my impoverished
frieze, [vase

Piece out its starved design, and fill my
With grapes, and add a visor and a Term,
And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx
That in his struggle throws the thyrus
down,

To comfort me on my entablature
Whereon I am to lie till I must ask
"Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave
me, there!

For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude
To death—ye wish it—God, ye wish it!
Stone—

Gritstone, a-crumble! Clammy squares
which sweat [through—

As if the corpse they keep were oozing
And no more *lapis* to delight the world!
Well, go! I bless ye. Fewer tapers there,
But in a row: and, going, turn your backs
—Ay, like departing altar-ministrants,
And leave me in my church, the church
for peace,

That I may watch at leisure if he leers—
Old Gandolf—at me, from his onion-
stone,

As still he envied me, so fair she was!¹
1845.

W SAUL

I

SAID Abner, "At last thou art come!

Ere I tell, ere thou speak,

Kiss my cheek, wish me well!" Then I
wished it, and did kiss his cheek.

And he: "Since the King, O my friend,
for thy countenance sent,

Neither drunken nor eaten have we;
nor until from his tent

¹ "I know no other piece of modern English, prose or poetry, in which there is so much told, as in these lines, of the Renaissance spirit,—its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, of luxury, and of good Latin. It is nearly all that I said of the central Renaissance in thirty pages of the *Stones of Venice*, put into as many lines, Browning's being also the antecedent work. The worst of it is that this kind of concentrated writing needs so much solution before the reader can fairly get the good of it, that people's patience fails them, and they give the thing up as insoluble; though, truly, it ought to be to the current of common thought like Saladin's talisman, dipped in clear water, not soluble altogether, but making the element medicinal." (*Ruskin*.) Other aspects of the Renaissance spirit, finer but equally true, are expressed, with similar concentration, in Old Pictures in Florence, Pictor Ignotus, Andrea del Sarto, The Grammarian's Funeral, etc. etc.

Thou return with the joyful assurance
the King liveth yet,
Shall our lip with the honey be bright,
with the water be wet.

For out of the black mid-tent's silence,
a space of three days,

Not a sound hath escaped to thy ser-
vants, of prayer nor of praise,

To betoken that Saul and the Spirit have
ended their strife,

And that, faint in his triumph, the mon-
arch sinks back upon life.

II

"Yet now my heart leaps, O beloved!
God's child with his dew

On thy gracious gold hair, and those
lilies still living and blue

Just broken to twine round thy harp-
strings, as if no wild heat

Were now raging to torture the desert!"

III

Then I, as was meet,
Knelt down to the God of my fathers,
and rose on my feet,

And ran o'er the sand burnt to powder.
The tent was unlooped;

I pulled up the spear that obstructed,
and under I stooped;

Hands and knees on the slippery grass-
patch, all withered and gone,

That extends to the second enclosure, I
groped my way on

Till I felt where the foldskirts fly open.
Then once more I prayed,

And opened the foldskirts and entered,
and was not afraid

But spoke, "Here is David, thy ser-
vant!" And no voice replied.

At the first I saw naught but the black-
ness: but soon I descried

A something more black than the black-
ness—the vast, the upright

Main prop which sustains the pavilion:
and slow into sight

Grew a figure against it, gigantic and
blackest of all.

Then a sunbeam, that burst through the
tent-roof, showed Saul.

IV

He stood as erect as that tent-prop, both
arms stretched out wide

On the great cross-support in the cen-
tre, that goes to each side;

He relaxed not a muscle, but hung there
as, caught in his pangs

And waiting his change, the king-serpent all heavily hangs,
Far away from his kind, in the pine,
till deliverance come
With the spring-time,—so agonized Saul,
drear and stark, blind and dumb.

V

Then I tuned my harp,—took off the lilies we twine round its chords
Lest they snap 'neath the stress of the noontide—those sunbeams like swords!
And I first played the tune all our sheep know, as, one after one,
So docile they come to the pen-door till folding be done.
They are white and untorn by the bushes, for lo, they have fed
Where the long grasses stifle the water within the stream's bed;
And now one after one seeks its lodging, as star follows star
Into eve and the blue far above us,—so blue and so far!

VI

—Then the tune for which quails on the cornland will each leave his mate
To fly after the player; then, what makes the crickets elate
Till for boldness they fight one another; and then, what has weight
To set the quick jerboa a-musing outside his sand house—
There are none such as he for a wonder, half bird and half mouse!
God made all the creatures and gave them our love and our fear,
To give sign, we and they are his children, one family here.

VII

Then I played the help-tune of our reapers, their wine-song, when hand
Grasps at hand, eye lights eye in good friendship, and great hearts expand
And grow one in the sense of this world's life.—And then, the last song
When the dead man is praised on his journey—"Bear, bear him along,
With his few faults shut up like dead flowerets! Are balm seeds not here
To console us? The land has none left such as he on the bier.
Oh, would we might keep thee, my brother!"—And then, the glad chant
Of the marriage,—first go the young maidens, next, she whom we vaunt

As the beauty, the pride of our dwelling.—And then, the great march
Wherein man runs to man to assist him and buttress an arch
Naught can break; who shall harm them, our friends? Then, the chorus intoned
As the Levites go up to the altar in glory enthroned.
But I stopped here: for here in the darkness Saul groaned.

VIII

And I paused, held my breath in such silence, and listened apart;
And the tent shook, for mighty Saul shuddered: and sparkles 'gan dart
From the jewels that woke in his turban, at once, with a start,
All its lordly male-sapphires, and rubies courageous at heart.
So the head: but the body still moved not, still hung there erect.
And I bent once again to my playing, pursued it unchecked,
As I sang:—

IX

"Oh, our manhood's prime vigor!
No spirit feels waste,
Not a muscle is stopped in its playing nor sinew unbraced.
Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping from rock up to rock,
The strong rending of boughs from the fir-tree, the cool silver shock
Of the plunge in a pool's living water, the hunt of the bear,
And the sultriness showing the lion is couched in his lair.
And the meal, the rich dates yellowed over with gold dust divine,
And the locust-flesh steeped in the pitcher, the full draught of wine,
And the sleep in the dried river-channel where bulrushes tell
That the water was wont to go warbling so softly and well.
How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses forever in joy!
Hast thou loved the white locks of thy father, whose sword thou didst guard
When he trusted thee forth with the armies, for glorious reward?
Didst thou see the thin hands of thy mother, held up as men sung
The low song of the nearly-departed, and hear her faint tongue

Joining in while it could to the witness,
 "Let one more attest,
 I have lived, seen God's hand through a
 lifetime, and all was for best?"
 Then they sung through their tears in
 strong triumph, not much, but the rest.
 And thy brothers, the help and the con-
 test, the working whence grew
 Such result as, from seething grape-
 bundles, the spirit strained true:
 And the friends of thy boyhood—that
 boyhood of wonder and hope,
 Present promise and wealth of the future
 beyond the eye's scope,—
 Till lo, thou art grown to a monarch; a
 people is thine;
 And all gifts, which the world offers
 singly, on one head combine!
 On one head, all the beauty and strength,
 love and rage (like the three
 That, a-work in the rock, helps its labor
 and lets the gold go)
 High ambition and deeds which surpass
 it, fame crowning them,—all
 Brought to blaze on the head of one
 creature—King Saul!"

X

And lo, with that leap of my spirit,—
 heart, hand, harp and voice,
 Each lifting Saul's name out of sorrow,
 each bidding rejoice
 Saul's fame in the light it was made for
 —as when, dare I say,
 The Lord's army, in rapture of service,
 strains through its array,
 And upsoareth the cherubim-chariot—
 "Saul!" cried I, and stopped,
 And waited the thing that should follow.
 Then Saul, who hung propped
 By the tent's cross-support in the centre,
 was struck by his name.
 Have ye seen when Spring's arrowy
 summons goes right to the aim,
 And some mountain, the last to with-
 stand her, that held (he alone,
 While the vale laughed in freedom and
 flowers) on a broad bust of stone
 A year's snow bound about for a breast-
 plate,—leaves grasp of the sheet?
 Fold on fold all at once it crowds thun-
 derously down to his feet.
 And there fronts you, stark, black, but
 alive yet, your mountain of old,
 With his rents, the successive bequeath-
 ing of ages untold—
 Yea, each harm got in fighting your
 battles, each furrow and scar

Of his head thrust 'twixt you and the
 tempest—all hail, there they are!
 —Now again to be softened with ver-
 dure, again hold the nest
 Of the dove, tempt the goat and its
 young to the green on his crest
 For their food in the ardors of summer.
 One long shudder thrilled
 All the tent till the very air tingled,
 then sank and was stilled
 At the King's self left standing before
 me, released and aware.
 What was gone, what remained? All
 to traverse 'twixt hope and despair,
 Death was past, life not come: so he
 waited. Awhile his right hand
 Held the brow, helped the eyes left too
 vacant forthwith to remand
 To their place what new objects should
 enter: 't was Saul as before.
 I looked up and dared gaze at those eyes,
 nor was hurt any more
 Than by slow pallid sunsets in autumn,
 ye watch from the shore,
 At their sad level gaze o'er the ocean—
 a sun's slow decline
 Over hills which, resolved in stern
 silence, o'erlap and entwine
 Base with base to knit strength more
 intensely: so, arm folded arm
 O'er the chest whose slow heavings sub-
 sided.

XI

What spell or what charm,
 (For awhile there was trouble within
 me), what next should I urge
 To sustain him where song had restored
 him?—Song filled to the verge
 His cup with the wine of this life, press-
 ing all that it yields
 Of mere fruitage, the strength and the
 beauty: beyond, on what fields,
 Glean a vintage more potent and perfect
 to brighten the eye
 And bring blood to the lip, and com-
 mend them the cup they put by?
 He saith, "It is good;" still he drinks
 not: he lets me praise life,
 Gives assent, yet would die for his own
 part.

XII

Then fancies grew rife
 Which had come long ago on the pas-
 ture, when round me the sheep
 Fed in silence—above, the one eagle
 wheeled slow as in sleep;
 And I lay in my hollow and mused at
 the world that might lie

'Neath his ken, though I saw but the
strip 'twixt the hill and the sky :
And I laughed—"Since my days are
ordained to be passed with my flocks,
Let me people at least, with my fancies,
the plains and the rocks,
Dream the life I am never to mix with,
and image the show
Of mankind as they live in those fash-
ions I hardly shall know !
Schemes of life, its best rules and right
uses, the courage that gains,
And the prudence that keeps what men
strive for." And now these old trains
Of vague thought came again ; I grew
surer ; so, once more the string
Of my harp made response to my spirit,
as thus—

XIII

"Yea, my King,"

I began—"thou dost well in rejecting
mere comforts that spring
From the mere mortal life held in com-
mon by man and by brute :
In our flesh grows the branch of this
life, in our soul it bears fruit.
Thou hast marked the slow rise of the
tree,—how its stem trembled first
Till it passed the kid's lip, the stag's
antler ; then safely outburst
The fan-branches all round ; and thou
mindest when these too, in turn,
Broke a-bloom and the palm-tree seemed
perfect : yet more was to learn,
E'en the good that comes in with the
palm-fruit. Our dates shall weslight,
When their juice brings a cure for all
sorrow ? or care for the plight
Of the palm's self whose slow growth
produced them ? Not so ! stem and
branch
Shall decay, nor be known in their place,
while the palm-wine shall stanch
Every wound of man's spirit in winter.
I pour thee such wine,
Leave the flesh to the fate it was fit for !
the spirit be thine !
By the spirit, when age shall o'ercome
thee, thou still shalt enjoy
More indeed, than at first when incon-
scious, the life of a boy.
Crush that life, and behold its wine run-
ning ! Each deed thou hast done
Dies, revives, goes to work in the world !
until e'en as the sun
Looking down on the earth, though
clouds spoil him, though tempests
efface,

Can find nothing his own deed produced
not, must everywhere trace
The results of his past summer-prime,—
so, each ray of thy will,
Every flash of thy passion and prowess,
long over, shall thrill
Thy whole people, the countless, with
ardor, till they too give forth
A like cheer to their sons, who in turn,
fill the South and the North
With the radiance thy deed was the
germ of. Carouse in the past !
But the license of age has its limit ; thou
diest at last :
As the lion when age dims his eyeball,
the rose at her height,
So with man—so his power and his
beauty forever take flight.
No ! Again a long draught of my soul-
wine ! Look forth o'er the years !
Thou hast done now with eyes for the
actual ; begin with the seer's !
Is Saul dead ? In the depth of the vale
make his tomb—bid arise
A gray mountain of marble heaped four-
square, till, built to the skies,
Let it mark where the great First King
slumbers : whose fame would ye know ?
Up above see the rock's naked face,
where the record shall go
In great characters cut by the scribe,—
Such was Saul, so he did ;
With the sages directing the work, by
the populace chid,—
For not half, they'll affirm, is comprised
there ! Which fault to amend,
In the grove with his kind grows the
cedar, whereon they shall spend
(See, in tablets 't is level before them)
their praise, and record
With the gold of the graver, Saul's story,
—the stateman's great word
Side by side with the poet's sweet com-
ment. The river's a-wave
With smooth paper-reeds grazing each
other when prophet-winds rave :
So the pen gives unborn generations their
due and their part
In thy being ! Then, first of the mighty,
thank God that thou art !"

XIV

And behold while I sang . . . but O
Thou who didst grant me that day,
And before it not seldom hast granted
thy help to essay,
Carry on and complete an adventure,—
my shield and my sword

In that act where my soul was thy servant,
 thy word was my word,—
 Still be with me, who then at the summit
 of human endeavor
 And scaling the highest, man's thought
 could, gazed hopeless as ever
 On the new stretch of heaven above me
 —till, mighty to save,
 Just one lift of thy hand cleared that
 distance—God's throne from man's
 grave!
 Let me tell out my tale to its ending—
 my voice to my heart
 Which can scarce dare believe in what
 marvels last night I took part,
 As this morning I gather the fragments,
 alone with my sheep,
 And still fear lest the terrible glory
 vanish like sleep!
 For I wake in the gray dewy covert,
 while Hebron upheaves
 The dawn struggling with night on his
 shoulder, and Kidron retrieves
 Slow the damage of yesterday's sunshine.

XV

I say then,—my song

While I sang thus, assuring the monarch,
 and ever more strong
 Made a proffer of good to console him—
 he slowly resumed
 His old motions and habitudes kingly.
 The right hand replumed
 His black locks to their wonted compos-
 ure, adjusted the swathes
 Of his turban, and see—the huge sweat
 that his countenance bathes,
 He wipes off with the robe; and he girds
 now his loins as of yore,
 And feels slow for the armlets of price,
 with the clasp set before.
 He is Saul, ye remember in glory,—ere
 error had bent
 The broad brow from the daily com-
 munion; and still, though much spent
 Be the life and the bearing that front
 you, the same, God did choose,
 To receive what a man may waste,
 desecrate, never quite lose.
 So sank he along by the tent-prop till,
 stayed by the pile
 Of his armor and war-cloak and gar-
 ments, he leaned there awhile,
 And sat out my singing,—one arm round
 the tent-prop, to raise
 His bent head, and the other hung slack
 —till I touched on the praise
 I foresaw from all men in all time, to the
 man patient there;

And thus ended, the harp falling for-
 ward. Then first I was ware
 That he sat, as I say, with my head just
 above his vast knees
 Which were thrust out on each side
 around me, like oak roots which please
 To encircle a lamb when it slumbers.
 I looked up to know
 If the best I could do had brought solace;
 he spoke not, but slow
 Lifted up the hand slack at his side, till
 he laid it with care
 Soft and grave, but in mild settled will,
 on my brow: through my hair
 The large fingers were pushed, and he
 bent back my head, with kind power—
 All my face back, intent to peruse it, as
 men do a flower.
 Thus held he me there with his great
 eyes that scrutinized mine—
 And oh, all my heart how it loved him!
 but where was the sign?
 I yearned—"Could I help thee, my
 father, inventing a bliss.
 I would add, to that life of the past, both
 the future and this;
 I would give thee new life altogether, as
 good, ages hence,
 As this moment,—had love but the war-
 rant, love's heart to dispense!"

XVI

Then the truth came upon me. No harp
 more—no song more!—outbroke—

XVII

"I have gone the whole round of crea-
 tion: I saw and I spoke:
 I, a work of God's hand for that purpose,
 received in my brain
 And pronounced on the rest of his hand-
 work—returned him again
 His creation's approval or censure: I
 spoke as I saw:
 I report, as a man may of God's work—
 all's love, yet all's law.
 Now I lay down the judgeship he lent
 me. Each faculty tasked
 To perceive him, has gained an abyss,
 where a dewdrop was asked.
 Have I knowledge? confounded it
 shrivels at Wisdom laid bare.
 Have I forethought? how purblind, how
 blank to the Infinite Care!
 Do I task any faculty highest, to image
 success?
 I but open my eyes,—and perfection,
 no more and no less,

In the kind I imagined, full-fronts me,
 and God is seen God
 In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in
 the soul and the clod.
 And thus looking within and around me,
 I ever renew
 (With that stoop of the soul which in
 bending upraises it too)
 The submission of man's nothing-perfect
 to God's all-complete,
 As by each new obeisance in spirit, I
 climb to his feet.
 Yet with all this abounding experience,
 this deity known,
 I shall dare to discover some province,
 some gift of my own.
 There's a faculty pleasant to exercise,
 hard to hoodwink,
 I am fain to keep still in abeyance, (I
 laugh as I think)
 Lest, insisting to claim and parade in it,
 wot ye, I worst
 E'en the Giver in one gift.—Behold, I
 could love if I durst!
 But I sink the pretension as fearing a
 man may o'ertake
 God's own speed in the one way of love:
 I abstain for love's sake.
 —What, my soul? see thus far and
 no farther? when doors great and
 small,
 Nine-and-ninety flew ope at our touch,
 should the hundredth appall?
 In the least things have faith, yet dis-
 trust in the greatest of all?
 Do I find love so full in my nature, God's
 ultimate gift,
 That I doubt his own love can com-
 pete with it? Here, the parts shift?
 Here, the creature surpass the Creator,—
 the end, what Began?
 Would I fain in my impotent yearning
 do all for this man,
 And dare doubt he alone shall not help
 him, who yet alone can?
 Would it ever have entered my mind,
 the bare will, much less power.
 To bestow on this Saul what I sang of,
 the marvellous dower
 Of the life he was gifted and filled with?
 to make such a soul,
 Such a body, and then such an earth
 for insphering the whole?
 And doth it not enter my mind (as my
 warm tears attest)
 These good things being given, to go on,
 and give one more, the best?
 Ay, to save and redeem and restore him,
 maintain at the height

This perfection,—succeed with life's
 day-spring, death's minute of night?
 Interpose at the difficult minute, snatch
 Saul the mistake,
 Saul the failure, the ruin he seems now,
 —and bid him awake
 From the dream, the probation, the pre-
 lude, to find himself set
 Clear and safe in new light and new life,
 —a new harmony yet
 To be run, and continued, and ended—
 who knows?—or endure!
 The man taught enough by life's dream,
 of the rest to make sure;
 By the pain-throb, triumphantly win-
 ning intensified bliss,
 And the next world's reward and repose,
 by the struggles in this.

XVIII

“I believe it! 'Tis thou, God, that
 givest, 't is I who receive:
 In the first is the last, in thy will is my
 power to believe.
 All's one gift: thou canst grant it more-
 over, as prompt to my prayer
 As I breathe out this breath, as I open
 these arms to the air.
 From thy will stream the worlds, life
 and nature, thy dread Sabaoth:
 I will?—the mere atoms despise me!
 Why am I not loth
 To look that, even that in the face too?
 Why is it I dare
 Think but lightly of such impuissance?
 What stops my despair?
 This;—'t is not what man Does which
 exalts him, but what man Would do!
 See the King—I would help him but can-
 not, the wishes fall through.
 Could I wrestle to raise him from sorrow,
 grow poor to enrich,
 To fill up his life, starve my own out, I
 would—knowing which,
 I know that my service is perfect. Oh,
 speak through me now!
 Would I suffer for him that I love?
 So wouldst thou—so wilt thou!
 So shall crown thee the topmost, ineffa-
 blest, uttermost crown—
 And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor
 leave up nor down
 One spot for the creature to stand in! It
 is by no breath,
 Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salva-
 tion joins issue with death!
 As thy Love is discovered almighty,
 almighty be proved

Thy power, that exists with and for it,
 of being Beloved !
 He who did most, shall bear most ; the
 strongest shall stand the most weak.
 'T is the weakness in strength, that I cry
 for ! my flesh, that I seek
 In the Godhead ! I seek and I find it. O
 Saul, it shall be
 A Face like my face that receives thee ;
 a Man like to me,
 Thou shalt love and be loved by, for-
 ever : a Hand like this hand
 Shall throw open the gates of new life
 to thee ! See the Christ stand ! ”

XIX

I know not too well how I found my way
 home in the night.
 There were witnesses, cohorts about me,
 to left and to right,
 Angels, powers, the unuttered, unseen,
 the alive, the aware :
 I repressed, I got through them as
 hardly, as strugglingly there,
 As a runner beset by the populace
 famished for news—
 Life or death. The whole earth was
 awakened, hell loosed with her crews ;
 And the stars of night beat with emo-
 tion, and tingled and shot
 Out in fire the strong pain of pent knowl-
 edge : but I fainted not,
 For the Hand still impelled me at once
 and supported, suppressed
 All the tumult, and quenched it with
 quiet, and holy behest,
 Till the rapture was shut in itself, and
 the earth sank to rest.
 Anon at the dawn, all that trouble had
 withered from earth—
 Not so much, but I saw it die out in the
 day's tender birth ;
 In the gathered intensity brought to the
 gray of the hills ;
 In the shuddering forests' held breath ;
 in the sudden wind-thrills ;
 In the startled wild beasts that bore off,
 each with eye sidling still
 Though averted with wonder and dread ;
 in the birds stiff and chill
 That rose heavily, as I approached them,
 made stupid with awe :
 E'en the serpent that slid away silent,—
 he felt the new law.
 The same stared in the white humid
 faces upturned by the flowers ;
 The same worked in the heart of the
 cedar and moved the vine-bowers :

And the little brooks witnessing mur-
 mured, persistent and low,
 With their obstinate, all but hushed
 voices—“ E'en so, it is so ! ”

1845. 1855.¹

A WOMAN'S LAST WORD

LET's contend no more, Love,
 Strive nor weep :
 All be as before, Love,
 —Only sleep !

What so wild as words are ?
 I and thou
 In debate, as birds are,
 Hawk on bough !

See the creature stalking
 While we speak !
 Hush and hide the talking,
 Cheek on cheek !

What so false as truth is,
 False to thee ?
 Where the serpent's tooth is
 Shun the tree—

Where the apple reddens
 Never pry—
 Lest we lose our Edens,
 Eve and I.

Be a god and hold me
 With a charm !
 Be a man and fold me
 With thine arm !

Teach me, only teach, Love !
 As I ought
 I will speak thy speech, Love,
 Think thy thought—

Meet, if thou require it,
 Both demands,
 Laying flesh and spirit
 In thy hands.

That shall be to-morrow,
 Not to-night.
 I must bury sorrow
 Out of sight :

—Must a little weep, Love,
 (Foolish me !)
 And so fall asleep, Love,
 Loved by thee. 1855.

¹ The first part of the poem, up to Section X,
 was published in *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics*,
 1845 ; the complete poem, in *Men and Women*,
 1855.

EVELYN HOPE

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead !
 Sit and watch by her side an hour.
 That is her book-shelf, this her bed ;
 She plucked that piece of geranium-
 flower,
 Beginning to die too, in the glass ;
 Little has yet been changed, I think :
 The shutters are shut, no light may
 pass
 Save two long rays through the hinge's
 chink.

Sixteen years old when she died !
 Perhaps she had scarcely heard my
 name ;

It was not her time to love ; beside,
 Her life had many a hope and aim,
 Duties enough and little cares,
 And now was quiet, now astir,
 Till God's hand beckoned unawares.—
 And the sweet white brow is all of
 her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope ?
 What, your soul was pure and true,
 The good stars met in your horoscope,
 Made you of spirit, fire and dew—
 And, just because I was thrice as old
 And our paths in the world diverged
 so wide,

Each was naught to each, must I be
 told ?
 We were fellow mortals, naught be-
 side ?

No, indeed ! for God above
 Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
 And creates the love to reward the
 love :

I claim you still, for my own love's
 sake !
 Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
 Through worlds I shall traverse, not a
 few :

Much is to learn, much to forget
 Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come—at last it will,
 When, Evelyn Hope, what meant (I
 shall say)
 In the lower earth, in the years long
 still,
 That body and soul so pure and gay ?
 Why your hair was amber, I shall di-
 vine,
 And your mouth of your own gera-
 nium's red—

And what you would do with me, in
 fine,
 In the new life come in the old life's
 stead.

I have lived (I shall say) so much since
 then,
 Given up myself so many times,
 Gained me the gains of various men,
 Ransacked the ages, spoiled the
 climes ;
 Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full
 scope,
 Either I missed or itself missed me :
 And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope !
 What is the issue ? Let us see !

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while !
 My heart seemed full as it could hold ;
 There was place and to spare for the
 frank young smile,
 And the red young mouth, and the
 hair's young gold.
 So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to
 keep :
 See, I shut it inside the sweet cold
 hand !
 There, that is our secret : go to sleep !
 You will wake, and remember, and
 understand. 1855.

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

WHERE the quiet-colored end of evening
 smiles
 Miles and miles
 On the solitary pastures where our sheep
 Half-asleep
 Tinkle homeward through the twilight,
 stray or stop
 As they crop—
 Was the site once of a city great and
 gay,
 (So they say)
 Of our country's very capital, its prince
 Ages since
 Held his court in, gathered councils,
 wielding far
 Peace or war.

Now,—the country does not even boast
 a tree,
 As you see,
 To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain
 rills
 From the hills
 Intersect and give a name to, (else they
 run
 Into one,)

Where the domed and daring palace
shot its spires
Up like fires

O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
Bounding all,
Made of marble, men might march on
nor be pressed,
Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of
grass

Never was !

Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'er-
spreads

And embeds

Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
Stock or stone—

Where a multitude of men breathed joy
and woe

Long ago ;

Lust of glory pricked their hearts up,
dread of shame

Struck them tame ;

And that glory and that shame alike,
the gold

Bought and sold.

Now,—the single little turret that re-
mains

On the plains,

By the caper overrooted, by the gourd

Overscored,

While the patching houseleek's head of
blossom winks

Through the chinks—

Marks the basement whence a tower in
ancient time

Sprang sublime,

And a burning ring, all round, the
chariots traced

As they raced,

And the monarch and his minions and
his dames

Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-col-
ored eve

Smiles to leave

To their folding, all our many-tinkling
fleece

In such peace,

And the slopes and rills in undistin-
guished gray

Melt away—

That a girl with eager eyes and yellow
hair

Waits me there

In the turret whence the charioteers
caught soul

For the goal,

When the king looked, where she looks
now, breathless, dumb
Till I come.

But he looked upon the city, every side,
Far and wide,

All the mountains topped with temples,
all the grades

Colonnades,

All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts,—
and then,

All the men !

When I do come, she will speak not, she
will stand,

Either hand

On my shoulder, give her eyes the first
embrace

Of my face,

Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and
speech

Each on each.

In one year they sent a million fighters
forth

South and North,

And they built their gods a brazen pillar
high

As the sky,

Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full
force—

Gold, of course.

Oh heart ! oh blood that freezes, blood
that burns !

Earth's returns

For whole centuries of folly, noise and
sin !

Shut them in,

With their triumphs and their glories
and the rest !

Love is best.

1855.

UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY

(AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON
OF QUALITY)

HAD I but plenty of money, money
enough and to spare,

The house for me no doubt, were a
house in the city-square ;

Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads
at the window there !

Something to see, by Bacchus, some-
thing to hear, at least !

There, the whole day long, one's life is a
perfect feast ;

While up at a villa one lives, I maintain
it, no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like
the horn of a bull
Just on a mountain-edge as bare as the
creature's skull,
Save a mere slag of a bush with hardly
a leaf to pull!
—I scratch my own, sometimes, to see
if the hair's turned wool.

But the city, oh the city—the square
with the houses! Why,
They are stone-faced, white as a curd,
there's something to take the eye!
Houses in four straight lines, not a single
front awry;
You watch who crosses and gossips, who
saunters, who hurries by;
Green blinds, as a matter of course, to
draw when the sun gets high;
And the shops with fanciful signs which
are painted properly.

What of a villa? Though winter be over
in March by rights,
'T is May perhaps ere the snow shall
have withered well off the heights:
You've the brown ploughed land before,
where the oxen steam and wheeze,
And the hills over-smoked behind by the
faint gray olive-trees.

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've
summer all at once;
In a day he leaps complete with a few
strong April suns.
'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat,
scarce risen three fingers well,
The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows
out its great red bell
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the
children to pick and sell.

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a
fountain to spout and splash!
In the shade it sings and springs: in the
shine such foambows flash
On the horses with curling fish-tails,
that prance and paddle and pash
Round the lady atop in her coach—fifty
gazers do not abash,
Though all that she wears is some weeds
round her waist in a sort of sash.

All the year long at the villa, nothing to
see though you linger,
Except yon cypress that points like
death's lean lifted forefinger.
Some think fireflies pretty, when they
mix i' the corn and mingle,

Or thrud the stinking hemp till the stalks
of it seem a-tingle.
Late August or early September, the
stunning cicada is shrill,
And the bees keep their tiresome whine
round the resinous firs on the hill.
Enough of the seasons,—I spare you the
months of the fever and chill.

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the
blessed church-bells begin:
No sooner the bells leave off than the
diligence rattles in:
You get the pick of the news, and it
costs you never a pin.
By and by there's the travelling doctor
gives pills, lets blood, draws teeth;
Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the
market beneath.
At the post-office such a scene-picture—
the new play, piping hot!
And a notice how, only this morning,
three liberal thieves were shot.
Above it, behold the Archbishop's most
fatherly of rebukes,
And beneath, with his crown and his
lion, some little new law of the
Duke's!
Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the
Reverend Don So-and-so,
Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint
Jerome, and Cicero,
“And moreover,” (the sonnet goes
rhyming,) “the skirts of Saint Paul
has reached,
Having preached us those six Lent-
lectures more unctuous than ever he
preached.”
Noon strikes,—here sweeps the proces-
sion! our Lady borne smiling and
smart
With a pink gauze gown all spangles,
and seven swords stuck in her heart!
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum,
tootle-te-tootle the fife;
No keeping one's haunches still: it's the
greatest pleasure in life.

But bless you, it's dear—it's dear!
fowls, wine, at double the rate.
They have clapped a new tax upon salt,
and what oil pays passing the gate
It's a horror to think of. And so, the
villa for me, not the city!

Beggars can scarcely be choosers: but
still—ah, the pity, the pity!
Look, two and two go the priests, then
the monks with cows and sandals.

And the penitents dressed in white
shirts, a-holding the yellow candles ;
One, he carries a flag up straight, and
another across with handles,
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear,
for the better prevention of scandals :
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-
te-tootle* the fife.

Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no
such pleasure in life ! 1855.

A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI'S

OH Galuppi, Baldassare, this is very sad
to find !

I can hardly misconceive you ; it would
prove me deaf and blind ;
But although I take your meaning, 'tis
with such a heavy mind !

Here you come with your old music, and
here 's all the good it brings.

What, they lived once thus at Venice
where the merchants were the kings,
Where St. Mark's is, where the Doges
used to wed the sea with rings ?

Ay, because the sea 's the street there ;
and 't is arched by . . . what you call
. . . Shylock's bridge with houses on it,
where they kept the carnival :
I was never out of England—it 's as if I
saw it all.

Did young people take their pleasure
when the sea was warm in May ?

Balls and masks begun at midnight,
burning ever to mid-day,
When they made up fresh adventures
for the morrow, do you say ?

Was a lady such a lady, cheeks so round
and lips so red,—

On her neck the small face buoyant,
like a bell-flower on its bed,
O'er the breast's superb abundance where
a man might base his head ?

Well, and it was graceful of them—
they 'd break talk off and afford

—She, to bite her mask's black velvet—
he, to finger on his sword,

While you sat and played Toccatas,
stately at the clavichord ?

What ? Those lesser thirds so plaintive,
sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,
Told them something ? Those suspen-
sions those solutions — "Must we
die ?"

Those commiserating sevenths—"Life
might last ! we can but try !"

"Were you happy ?"—"Yes."—"And
are you still as happy ?"—"Yes. And
you ?"

—"Then, more kisses !"—"Did I stop
them, when a million seemed so
few ?"

Hark, the dominant's persistence till it
must be answered to !

So, an octave struck the answer. Oh,
they praised you, I dare say !

"Brave Galuppi ! that was music ! good
alike at grave and gay !

I can always leave off talking when I
hear a master play !"

Then they left you for their pleasure :
till in due time, one by one,

Some with lives that came to nothing,
some with deeds as well undone,
Death stepped tacitly and took them
where they never see the sun.

But when I sit down to reason, think to
take my stand nor swerve,

While I triumph o'er a secret wrung
from nature's close reserve,

In you come with your cold music till I
creep through every nerve.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creak-
ing where a house was burned :

"Dust and ashes, dead and done with,
Venice spent what Venice earned.

The soul, doubtless, is immortal—where
a soul can be discerned.

"Yours for instance : you know physics,
something of geology,

Mathematics are your pastime ; souls
shall rise in their degree ;

Butterflies may dread extinction,—
you 'll not die, it cannot be !

"As for Venice and her people, merely
born to bloom and drop,

Here on earth they bore their fruitage,
mirth and folly were the crop :

What of soul was left, I wonder, when
the kissing had to stop ?

"Dust and ashes !" So you creak it,
and I want the heart to scold.

Dear dead women, with such hair, too
—what's become of all the gold

Used to hang and brush their bosoms !
I feel chilly and grown old. 1855.

OLD PICTURES IN FLORENCE

THE morn when first it thunders in
March,

The eel in the pond gives a leap, they
say :

As I leaned and looked over the aloed
arch

Of the villa-gate this warm March day,
No flash snapped, no dumb thunder rolled
In the valley beneath where, white
and wide

And washed by the morning water gold,
Florence lay out on the mountain-side.

River and bridge and street and square
Lay mine, as much at my beck and call,

Through the live translucent bath of air,
As the sights in a magic crystal ball.

And of all I saw and of all I praised,
The most to praise and the best to see,

Was the startling bell-tower Giotto
raised :

But why did it more than startle me ?

Giotto, how, with that soul of yours,
Could you play me false who loved you
so ?

Some slights if a certain heart endures
Yet it feels, I would have your fellows
know !

I' faith, I perceive not why I should care
To break a silence that suits them best,

But the thing grows somewhat hard to
bear

When I find a Giotto join the rest.

On the arch where olives overhead
Print the blue sky with twig and leaf,

(That sharp-curved leaf which they
never shed)

'Twixt the aloes, I used to lean in chief,
And mark through the winter after-

noons,

By a gift God grants me now and then,
In the mild decline of those suns like

moons,

Who walked in Florence, besides her
men.

They might chirp and chaffer, come and
go

For pleasure or profit, her men alive—
My business was hardly with them, I

traw,

But with empty cells of the human
hive ;

—With the chapter-room, the cloister-
porch,

The church's apsis, aisle or nave,
Tis crypt, one fingers along with a torch
Its face set rull for the sun to shave.

Wherever a fresco peels and drops,
Wherever an outline weakens and

wanes
Till the latest life in the painting stops,

Stands One whom each fainter pulse-
tick pains :

One, wishful each scrap should clutch
the brick,

Each tinge not wholly escape the
plaster,

—A lion who dies of an ass's kick,
The wronged great soul of an ancient

Master.

For oh, this world and the wrong it does !
They are safe in heaven with their

backs to it,
The Michaels and Rafaels, you hum and

buzz
Round the works of, you of the little

wit !
Do their eyes contract to the earth's old

scope,
Now that they see God face to face,
And have all attained to be poets, I hope ?

'T is their holiday now, in any case.

Much they reck of your praise and you !
But the wronged great souls—can they

be quit
Of a world where their work is all to do,

Where you style them, you of the little
wit,

Old Master This and Early the Other,
Not dreaming that Old and New are

fellows :

A younger succeeds to an elder brother,
Da Vincis derive in good time from

Dellos.

And here where your praise might yield
returns,

And a handsome word or two give
help,

Here, after your kind, the mastiff girns
And the puppy pack of poodles yelp.

What, not a word for Stefano there,
Of brow once prominent and starry,

Called Nature's Ape, and the world's
despair

For his peerless painting? (See Vasari.)

There stands the Master. Study, my
friends,

What a man's work comes to! So he
plans it,

Performs it, perfects it, makes amends
For the toiling and moiling, and then,
sic transit!

Happier the thrifty blind-folk labor,
With upturned eye while the hand is
busy,

Not sidling a glance at the coin of their
neighbor!

'T is looking downward that makes one
dizzy.

"If you knew their work you would deal
your dole."

May I take upon me to instruct you?
When Greek Art ran and reached the
goal,

Thus much had the world to boast in
fructu—

The Truth of Man, as by God first spoken,
Which the actual generations garble.

Was re-uttered, and Soul (which Limbs
betoken)

And Limbs (Soul informs) made new
in marble.

So you saw yourself as you wished you
were,

As you might have been, as you can-
not be;

Earth here, rebuked by Olympus there:
And grew content in your poor degree

With your little power, by those statues'
godhead,

And your little scope, by their eyes'
full sway,

And your little grace, by their grace
embodied

And your little date, by their forms
that stay.

You would fain be kinglier, say, than I
am?

Even so, you will not sit like Theseus,
You would prove a model? The Son of

Priam,
Has yet the advantage in arms' and
knees' use.

You're wroth—can you slay your snake
like Apollo?

You're grieved—still Niobe's the
grander!

You live—there's the Racers' frieze to
follow:

You die—there's the dying Alexander.

So, testing your weakness by their
strength,

Your meagre charms by their rounded
beauty,

Measured by Art in your breadth and
length,

You learned—to submit is a mortal's
duty.

—When I say "you" 'tis the common
soul,

The collective, I mean: the race of
Man

That receives life in parts to live in a
whole,

And grow here according to God's
clear plan.

Growth came when, looking your last
on them all,

You turned your eyes inwardly one
fine day

And cried with a start—What if we so
small

Be greater and grander the while than
they?

Are they perfect of lineament, perfect of
stature?

In both, of such lower types are we
Precisely because of our wider nature;

For time, theirs—ours, for eternity.

To-day's brief passion limits their range;
It seethes with the morrow for us and
more.

They are perfect—how else? they shall
never change:

We are faulty—why not? we have
time in store.

The Artificer's hand is not arrested
With us; we are rough-hewn, nowise

polished:

They stand for our copy, and once, in-
vested

With all they can teach, we shall see
them abolished.

'T is a life-long toil till our lump be
leaven—

The better! What's come to perfec-
tion perishes.

Things learned on earth, we shall practise
in heaven:

Works done least rapidly, Art most
cherishes.

Thyself shalt afford the example, Giotto!
Thy one work, not to decrease or dim-
inish,

Done at a stroke, was just (was it not?)
"O!"

Thy great Campanile is still to finish.

Is it true that we are now, and shall be
hereafter,

But what and where depend on life's
minute?
Hails heavenly cheer or infernal laughter
Our first step out of the gulf or in it?
Shall Man, such step within his endeavor,
Man's face, have no more play and
action
Than joy which is crystallized forever,
Or grief, an eternal petrification?

On which I conclude, that the early
painters,
To cries of "Greek Art and what more
wish you?"—
Replied, "To become now self-ac-
quainters,
And paint man, man, whatever the
issue!
Make new hopes shine through the flesh
they fray,
New fears aggrandize the rags and
tatters:
To bring the invisible full into play!
Let the visible go to the dogs—what
matters?"

Give these, I exhort you, their guerdon
and glory
For daring so much, before they well
did it.
The first of the new, in our race's story,
Beats the last of the old; 't is no idle
quiddit.
The worthies began a revolution,
Which if on earth you intend to ac-
knowledge,
Why, honor them now! (ends my allo-
cution)
Nor confer your degree when the folk
leave college.

There's a fancy some lean to and others
hate—
That, when this life is ended, begins
New work for the soul in another state,
Where it strives and gets weary, loses
and wins:
Where the strong and the weak, this
world's congeries,
Repeat in large what they practised in
small,
Through life after life in unlimited
series;
Only the scale's to be changed, that's
all.

Yet I hardly know. When a soul has
seen
By the means of Evil that Good is best,

And, through earth and its noise, what
is heaven's serene,—
When our faith in the same has stood
the test—
Why the child grown man, you burn the
rod,
The uses of labor are surely done;
There remaineth a rest for the people of
God:
And I have had troubles enough, for
one.

But at any rate I have loved the season
Of Art's spring-birth so dim and dewy;
My sculptor is Nicolo the Pisan,
My painter—who but Cimabue?
Nor ever was man of them all indeed,
From these to Ghiberti and Ghirlan-
dajo,
Could say that he missed my critic-meed.
So, now to my special grievance—
heigh-ho!

Their ghosts still stand, as I said before,
Watching each fresco flaked and
rasped,
Blocked up, knocked out, or white-
washed o'er:
—No getting again what the church
has grasped!
The works on the wall must take their
chance;
"Works never conceded to England's
thick clime!"
(I hope they prefer their inheritance
Of a bucketful of Italian quick-lime.)

When they go at length, with such a
shaking
Of heads o'er the old delusion, sadly
Each master his way through the black
streets taking,
Where many a lost work breathes
though badly—
Why don't they bethink them of who has
merited?
Why not reveal, while their pictures
dree
Such doom, how a captive might be out-
ferreted?
Why is it they never remember me?

Not that I expect the great Bigordi,
Nor Sandro to hear me, chivalric, belli-
cose;
Nor the wronged Lippino; and not a
word I
Say of a scrap of Frà Angelico's:
But are you too fine, Taddeo Gaddi,

To grant me a taste of your intonaco,
Some Jerome that seeks the heaven with
a sad eye?

Not a churlish saint, Lorenzo Monaco?

Could not the ghost with the close red
cap,

My Pollajolo, the twice a craftsman,
Save me a sample, give me the hap
Of a muscular Christ that shows the
draughtsman?

No Virgin by him the somewhat petty,
Of finical touch and tempera crumbly—

Could not Alesso Baldovinetti
Contribute so much, I ask him
humbly?

Margheritone of Arezzo,
With the grave-clothes garb and
swaddling barret,

(Why purse up mouth and beak in a pet
so,

You bald old saturnine poll-clawed
parrot?)

Not a poor glimmering Crucifixion,
Where in the foreground kneels the
donor?

If such remain, as is my conviction,
The hoarding it does you but little
honor.

They pass; for them the panels may
thrill,

The tempera grow alive and tinglish;
Their pictures are left to the mercies
still

Of dealers and stealers, Jews and the
English,

Who, seeing mere money's worth in their
prize,

Will sell it to somebody calm as Zeno
At naked High Art, and in ecstasies
Before some clay-cold vile Carlino!

No matter for these! But Giotto, you.
Have you allowed, as the town-tongues
babble it,—

Oh, never! it shall not be counted true—
That a certain precious little tablet

Which Buonarrotti eyed like a lover—
Was buried so long in oblivion's womb

And, left for another than I to discover,
Turns up at last! and to whom? — to
whom?

I, that have haunted the dim San
Spirito,

(Or was it rather the Ognissanti?)

Patient on altar-step planting a weary
toe!

Nay, I shall have it yet! *Detur amanti!*
My Koh-i-noor—or (if that 's a plati-
tude)

Jewel of Giamschid, the Persian Sofi's
eye;

So, in anticipative gratitude,
What if I take up my hope and pro-
phesy?

When the hour grows ripe, and a certain
dotard

Is pitched, no parcel that needs invoic-
ing,

To the worse side of the Mont St. Gothard,
We shall begin by way of rejoicing;

None of that shooting the sky (blank
cartridge),

Nor a civic guard, all plumes and
lacquer,

Hunting Radetzky's soul like a partridge
Over Morello with squib and cracker.

This time we 'll shoot better game and
bag 'em hot—

No mere display at the stone of Dante
But a kind of sober Witanagemot
(Ex: "Casa Guidi," *quod videas ante*)

Shall ponder, once Freedom restored to
Florence,

How Art may return that departed
with her.

Go, hated house, go each trace of the
Lorraine's,

And bring us the days of Orgagna
hither!

How we shall prologuize, how we shall
perorate,

Utter fit things upon art and history,
Feel truth at blood-heat and falsehood at
zero rate,

Make of the want of the age no
mystery;

Contrast the fructuous and sterile eras,
Show—monarchy ever its uncouth cub
licks

Out of the bear's shape into Chimaera's,
While Pure Art's birth is still the
republic's.

Then one shall propose in a speech (curt
Tuscan,

Expurgate and sober, with scarcely an
"issimo.")

To end now our half-told tale of Cam-
buscan,

And turn the bell-tower's *alt* to
altissimo:

And fine as the beak of a young beccaccia
The Campanile, the Duomo's fit ally,

Shall soar up in gold full fifty braccia,
Completing Florence, as Florence
Italy.

Shall I be alive that morning the scaffold
Is broken away, and the long-pent fire,
Like the golden hope of the world, un-
baffled

Springs from its sleep, and up goes the
spire
While "God and the People" plain for
its motto,

Thence the new tricolor flaps at the
sky?

At least to foresee that glory of Giotto
And Florence together, the first am I!
1855.

"DE GUSTIBUS—"

YOUR ghost will walk, you lover of trees,
(If our loves remain)
In an English lane,

By a cornfield-side a-flutter with poppies.
Hark, those two in the hazel coppice—
A boy and a girl, if the good fates please,
Making love, say,—
The happier they!

Draw yourself up from the light of the
moon,

And let them pass, as they will too soon.
With the beanflowers' boon,
And the blackbird's tune,
And May, and June!

What I love best in all the world
Is a castle, precipice-encurled,
In a gash of the wind-grieved Apennine.
Or look for me, old fellow of mine,
(If I get my head from out the mouth
O' the grave, and loose my spirit's bands,
And come again to the land of lands)—
In a sea-side house to the farther South,
Where the baked cicala dies of drouth,
And one sharp tree—'t is a cypress—
stands

By the many hundred years red-rusted,
Rough iron-spiked, ripe fruit-o'er-crusted,
My sentinel to guard the sands
To the water's edge. For, what expands
Before the house, but the great opaque
Blue breadth of sea without a break?
While, in the house, forever crumbles
Some fragment of the frescoed walls,
From blisters where a scorpion sprawls.
A girl bare-footed brings, and tumbles
Down on the pavement, green-flesh me-
lons,

And says there 's news to-day—the king

Was shot at, touched in the liver-wing,
Goes with his Bourbon arm in a sling,
—She hopes they have not caught the
felons.

Italy, my Italy!

Queen Mary's saying serves for me—
(When fortune's malice
Lost her, Calais)

Open my heart and you will see
Graved inside of it, "Italy."

Such lovers old are I and she:

So it always was, so shall ever be!
1855.

MY STAR

ALL that I know
Of a certain star

Is, it can throw
(Like the angled spar)

Now a dart of red,

Now a dart of blue;

Till my friends have said

They would fain see, too,

My star that dartles the red and the
blue!

Then it stops like a bird; like a flower,
hangs furled:

They must solace themselves with the
Saturn above it.

What matter to me if their star is a
world?

Mine has opened its soul to me; there-
fore I love it. 1855.

ANY WIFE TO ANY HUSBAND

MY love, this is the bitterest, that thou—
Who art all truth, and who dost love me
now

As thine eyes say, as thy voice breaks
to say—

Shouldst love so truly, and couldst love
me still

A whole long life through, had but love
its will.

Would death that leads me from thee
brook delay;—

I have but to be by thee, and thy hand
Will never let mine go, nor heart with-
stand

The beating of my heart to reach its
place.

When shall I look for thee and feel thee
gone?

When cry for the old comfort and find
none?

Never, I know! Thy soul is in thy face.

Oh, I should fade—'t is willed so ! Might
 I save,
 Gladly I would, whatever beauty gave
 Joy to thy sense, for that was pre-
 cious too.

It is not to be granted. But the soul
 Whence the love comes, all ravage
 leaves that whole ;
 Vainly the flesh fades ; soul makes all
 things new.

It would not be because my eye grew
 dim

Thou couldst not find the love there,
 thanks to Him

Who never is dishonored in the spark
 He gave us from his fire of fires and
 bade

Remember whence it sprang, nor be
 afraid

While that burns on, though all the
 rest grow dark.

So, how thou wouldst be perfect, white
 and clean

Outside as inside, soul and soul's de-
 mesne

Alike, this body given to show it by !
 Oh, three-parts through the worst of
 life's abyss,

What plaudits from the next world after
 this,

Couldst thou repeat a stroke and gain
 the sky !—

And is it not the bitterer to think
 That disengage our hands and thou wilt
 sink

Although thy love was love in very
 deed ?

I know that nature ! Pass a festive day,
 Thou dost not throw its relic-flower away
 Nor bid its music's loitering echo
 speed.

Thou let'st the stranger's glove lie where
 it fell ;

If old things remain old things all is
 well,

For thou art grateful as becomes man
 best :

And hadst thou only heard me play one
 tune,

Or viewed me from a window, not so
 soon

With thee would such things fade as
 with the rest.

I seem to see ! We meet and part ; 't is
 brief ;

The book I opened keeps a folded leaf,
 The very chair I sat on, breaks the
 rank ;

That is a portrait of me on the wall—
 Three lines, my face comes at so slight a
 call :

And for all this, one little hour to
 thank !

But now, because the hour through years
 was fixed,

Because our inmost beings met and
 mixed,

Because thou once hast loved me—wilt
 thou dare

Say to thy soul and Who may list beside,
 " Therefore she is immortally my bride ;
 Chance cannot change my love, nor
 time impair.

" So, what if in the dusk of life that's
 left,

I, a tired traveller of my sun bereft,
 Look from my path when, mimicking
 the same,

The firely glimpses past me, come and
 gone ?

—Where was it till the sunset ? Where
 anon

It will be at the sunrise ! What 's to
 blame ? "

Is it so helpful to thee ? Canst thou
 take

The mimic up, nor, for the true thing's
 sake,

Put gently by such efforts at a beam ?
 Is the remainder of the way so long,
 Thou need'st the little solace, thou the
 strong ?

Watch out thy watch, let weak ones
 doze and dream !

Ah, but the fresher faces ! " Is it true,"
 Thou 'lt ask, " some eyes are beautiful
 and new ?

Some hair,—how can one choose but
 grasp such wealth ?

And if a man would press his lips to lips
 Fresh as the wilding hedge-rose-cup
 there slips

The dewdrop out of, must it be by
 stealth ?

" It cannot change the love still kept
 for Her,

More than if such a picture I prefer
 Passing a day with, to a room's bare
 side :

The painted form takes nothing she
possessed,
Yet, while the Titian's Venus lies at rest,
A man looks. Once more, what is
there to chide?"

So must I see, from where I sit and
watch,
My own self sell myself, my hand attach
Its warrant to the very thefts from
me—
Thy singleness of soul that made me
proud,
Thy purity of heart I loved aloud,
Thy man's-truth I was bold to bid God
see!

Love so, then, if thou wilt! Give all
thou canst
Away to the new faces—disentranced,
(Say it and think it) obdurate no
more;
Re-issue looks and words from the old
mint,
Pass them afresh, no matter whose the
print
Image and superscription once they
bore!

Re-coin thyself and give it them to
spend,—
It all comes to the same thing at the
end,
Since mine thou wast, mine art and
mine shalt be,
Faithful or faithless, sealing up the sum
Or lavish of my treasure, thou must
come
Back to the heart's place here I keep
for thee!

Only, why should it be with stain at all?
Why must I, 'twixt the leaves of cor-
onal,
Put any kiss of pardon on thy brow?
Why need the other women know so
much,
And talk together, "Such the look and
such
The smile he used to love with, then as
now!"

Might I die last and show thee! Should
I find
Such hardship in the few years left
behind,
If free to take and light my lamp, and
go
Into thy tomb, and shut the door and sit,

Seeing thy face on those four sides of it
The better that they are so blank, I
know!

Why, time was what I wanted, to turn
o'er
Within my mind each look, get more
and more
By heart each word, too much to learn
at first:
And join thee all the fitter for the pause
'Neath the low doorway's lintel. That
were cause
For lingering, though thou calledst,
if I durst!

And yet thou art the nobler of us two:
What dare I dream of, that thou canst
not do,
Outstripping my ten small steps with
one stride?
I'll say then, here's a trial and a task—
Is it to bear?—if easy, I'll not ask:
Though love fail, I can trust on in thy
pride.

Pride?—when those eyes forestall the
life behind
The death I have to go through!—when
I find,
Now that I want thy help most, all
of thee!
What did I fear? Thy love shall hold
me fast
Until the little minute's sleep is past
And I wake saved.—And yet it will
not be! 1855.

W TWO IN THE CAMPAGNA

I WONDER do you feel to-day
As I have felt since, hand in hand,
We sat down on the grass, to stray
In spirit better through the land,
This morn of Rome and May?

For me, I touched a thought, I know,
Has tantalized me many times,
(Like turns of thread the spiders throw
Mocking across our path) for rhymes
To catch at and let go.

Help me to hold it! First it left
The yellowing fennel, run to seed
There, branching from the brickwork's
cleft,
Some old tomb's ruin; yonder weed
Took up the floating weft,

Where one small orange cup amassed
Five beetles—blind and green they
grope

Among the honey-meal: and last,
Everywhere on the grassy slope
I traced it. Hold it fast!

The champaign with its endless fleece
Of feathery grasses everywhere!
Silence and passion, joy and peace,
An everlasting wash of air—
Rome's ghost since her decease.

Such life here, through such lengths of
hours,

Such miracles performed in play,
Such primal naked forms of flowers,
Such letting nature have her way,
While heaven looks from its towers!

How say you? Let us, O my dove,
Let us be unashamed of soul,
As earth lies bare to heaven above!
How is it under our control
To love or not to love?

I would that you were all to me,
You that are just so much, no more.
Nor yours nor mine, nor slave nor free!
Where does the fault lie? What the
core

O' the wound, since wound must be?

I would I could adopt your will,
See with your eyes, and set my heart
Beating by yours, and drink my fill
At your soul's springs,—your part my
part
In life, for good and ill.

No, I yearn upward, touch you close,
Then stand away. I kiss your cheek,
Catch your soul's warmth,—I pluck the
rose
And love it more than tongue can
speak—
Then the good minute goes.

Already how am I so far
Out of that minute? Must I go
Still like the thistle-ball, no bar,
Onward, whenever light winds blow,
Fixed by no friendly star?

Just when I seemed about to learn!
Where is the thread now? Off again!
The old trick! Only I discern—
Infinite passion, and the pain
Of finite hearts that yearn. 1855.

MISCONCEPTIONS

THIS is a spray the Bird clung to,
Making it blossom with pleasure,
Ere the high tree-top she sprung to,
Fit for her nest and her treasure.
Oh, what a hope beyond measure
Was the poor spray's, which the flying
feet hung to,—
So to be singled out, built in, and sung
to!

This is a heart the Queen leaned on,
Thrilled in a minute erratic,
Ere the true bosom she bent on,
Meet for love's regal dalmatic.
Oh, what a fancy ecstatic
Was the poor heart's, ere the wanderer
went on—
Love to be saved for it, proffered to,
spent on! 1855.

ONE WAY OF LOVE

ALL June I bound the rose in sheaves.
Now, rose by rose, I strip the leaves
And strew them where Pauline may
pass.
She will not turn aside? Alas!
Let them lie. Suppose they die?
The chance was they might take her eye.

How many a month I strove to suit
These stubborn fingers to the lute!
To-day I venture all I know.
She will not hear my music? So!
Break the string; fold music's wing:
Suppose Pauline had bade me sing!

My whole life long I learned to love.
This hour my utmost art I prove
And speak my passion—heaven or
hell?
She will not give me heaven? 'T is
well!
Lose who may—I still can say,
Those who win heaven, blest are they!
1855.

ANOTHER WAY OF LOVE

JUNE was not over
Though past the full,
And the best of her roses
Had yet to blow,
When a man I know
(But shall not discover,
Since ears are dull,
And time discloses)

Turned him and said with a man's true
 air,
 Half sighing a smile in a yawn, as 't
 were,—
 "If I tire of your June, will she greatly
 care?"

Well, dear, in-doors with you !
 True ! serene deadness
 Tries a man's temper.
 What's in the blossom
 June wears on her bosom ?
 Can it clear scores with you ?
 Sweetness and redness,
Eadem semper !
 Go, let me care for it greatly or slightly !
 If June mend her bower now, your hand
 left unsightly
 By plucking the roses,—my June will do
 rightly.

And after, for pastime,
 If June be refulgent
 With flowers in completeness,
 All petals, no prickles,
 Delicious as trickles
 Of wine poured at mass-time,—
 And choose One indulgent
 To redness and sweetness :
 Or if, with experience of man and of
 spider,
 June use my June-lightning, the strong
 insect-ridder,
 And stop the fresh film-work,—why,
 June will consider. 1855.

RESPECTABILITY

DEAR, had the world in its caprice
 Deigned to proclaim "I know you
 both,
 Have recognized your plighted troth,
 Am sponsor for you : live in peace !"—
 How many precious months, and years
 Of youth had passed, that speed so
 fast,
 Before we found it out at last,
 The world, and what it fears !

How much of priceless life were spent
 With men that every virtue decks,
 And women models of their sex,
 Society's true ornament,—
 Ere we dared wander, nights like this,
 Through wind and rain, and watch the
 Seine,
 And feel the Boulevard break again
 To warmth and light and bliss !

I know ! the world proscribes not love ;
 Allows my finger to caress
 Your lips' contour and downiness,
 Provided it supply a glove.
 The world's good word !—the Institute !
 Guizot receives Montalembert !
 Eh ? Down the court three lampions
 flare :
 Put forward your best foot ! 1855.

LOVE IN A LIFE

ROOM after room,
 I hunt the house through
 We inhabit together.
 Heart, fear nothing, for, heart, thou
 shalt find her—
 Next time, herself !—not the trouble be-
 hind her
 Left in the curtain, the couch's perfume !
 As she brushed it, the cornice-wreath
 blossomed anew :
 Yon looking-glass gleamed at the wave
 of her feather.

Yet the day wears,
 And door succeeds door ;
 I try the fresh fortune—
 Range the wide house from the wing to
 the center.
 Still the same chance ! she goes out as I
 enter.
 Spend my whole day in the quest,—who
 cares ?
 But 't is twilight, you see,—with such
 suites to explore,
 Such closets to search, such alcoves to
 importune ! 1855.

LIFE IN A LOVE

ESCAPE me ?
 Never—
 Beloved !
 While I am I, and you are you,
 So long as the world contains us both,
 Me the loving and you the loth,
 While the one eludes, must the other
 pursue.
 My life is a fault at last, I fear :
 It seems too much like a fate, indeed !
 Though I do my best I shall scarce
 succeed.
 But what if I fail of my purpose here ?
 It is but to keep the nerves at strain,
 To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,
 And baffled, get up and begin again,—
 So the chase takes up one's life—that's
 all.

While, look but once from your farthest bound

At me so deep in the dust and dark,
No sooner the old hope goes to ground
Than a new one, straight to the self-
same mark,
I shape me—
Ever
Removed!

1855.

IN THREE DAYS

So, I shall see her in three days
And just one night, but nights are short,
Then two long hours, and that is morn.
See how I come, unchanged, unworn!
Feel, where my life broke off from thine,
How fresh the splinters keep and fine,—
Only a touch and we combine!

Too long, this time of year, the days!
But nights, at least the nights are short.
As night shows where her one moon is,
A hand's-breadth of pure light and bliss,
So life's night gives my lady birth
And my eyes hold her! What is worth
The rest of heaven, the rest of earth?

O loaded curls, release your store
Of warmth and scent, as once before
The tingling hair did, lights and darks
Outbreaking into fairy sparks,
When under curl and curl I pried
After the warmth and scent inside,
Through lights and darks how manifold—

The dark inspired, the light controlled!
As early Art embrowns the gold.

What great fear, should one say, "Three
days
That change the world might change as
well

Your fortune; and if joy delays,
Be happy that no worse befell!"
What small fear, if another says,
"Three days and one short night beside
May throw no shadow on your ways;
But years must teem with change un-
tried,

With chance not easily defied,
With an end somewhere undescried."
No fear!—or if a fear be born
This minute, it dies out in scorn.
Fear? I shall see her in three days
And one night, now the nights are short,
Then just two hours, and that is morn.

1855.

THE GUARDIAN-ANGEL

A PICTURE AT FANO

DEAR and great Angel, wouldst thou
only leave

That child, when thou hast done with
him, for me!

Let me sit all the day here, that when eve
Shall find performed thy special minis-
try,

And time come for departure, thou, sus-
pending

Thy flight, may'st see another child for
tending,

Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no
more,

From where thou standest now, to
where I gaze,
—And suddenly my head is covered o'er
With those wings, white above the
child who prays

Now on that tomb—and I shall feel thee
guarding

Me, out of all the world; for me, discard-
ing

Yon heaven thy home, that waits and
opes its door.

I would not look up thither past thy
head

Because the door opes, like that child,
I know,

For I should have thy gracious face in-
stead,

Thou bird of God! And wilt thou
bend me low

Like him, and lay, like his, my hands
together,

And lift them up to pray, and gently
tether

Me, as thy lamb there, with thy gar-
ment's spread?

If this was ever granted, I would rest
My head beneath thine, while thy
healing hands

Close-covered both my eyes beside thy
breast,

Pressing the brain, which too much
thought expands,

Back to its proper size again, and smooth-
ing

Distortion down till every nerve had
soothing,

And all lay quiet, happy and sup-
pressed.

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired!

I think how I should view the earth and skies

And sea, when once again my brow was bared

After thy healing, with such different eyes.

O world, as God has made it! All is beauty:

And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.

What further may be sought for or declared?

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach
(Alfred, dear friend!)—that little child to pray,

Holding the little hands up, each to each
Pressed gently,—with his own head turned away

Over the earth where so much lay before him

Of work to do, though heaven was opening o'er him,

And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went

To sit and see him in his chapel there,
And drink his beauty to our soul's content

—My angel with me too: and since I care

For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power

And glory comes this picture for a dower, [cent)—

Fraught with a pathos so magnifi-

And since he did not work thus earnestly
At all times, and has else endured some wrong—

I took one thought his picture struck from me,

And spread it out, translating it to song.

My love is here. Where are you, dear old friend?

How rolls the Wairoa at your world's far end?

This is Ancona, yonder is the sea.

1855.

W

MEMORABILIA

AN, did you once see Shelley plain,
And did he stop and speak to you,

And did you speak to him again?

How strange it seems and new!

But you were living before that,
And also you are living after;
And the memory I started at—
My starting moves your laughter!

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own
And a certain use in the world no doubt,

Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone
'Mid the blank miles round about:

For there I picked up on the heather
And there I put inside my breast

A moulted feather, an eagle-feather!
Well, I forget the rest. 1855.

W

POPULARITY

STAND still, true poet that you are!

I know you; let me try and draw you,
Some night you'll fail us: when afar

You rise, remember one man saw you,
Knew you, and named a star!

My star, God's glow-worm! Why extend
That loving hand of his which leads you,

Yet locks you safe from end to end
Of this dark world, unless he needs you,

Just saves your light to spend?

His clenched hand shall unclothe at last,
I know, and let out all the beauty:

My poet holds the future fast,
Accepts the coming ages' duty,
Their present for this past.

That day the earth's feast-master's brow
Shall clear, to God the chalice raising;
"Others give best at first, but thou
Forever set'st our table praising,
Keep'st the good wine till now!"

Meantime, I'll draw you as you stand,
With few or none to watch and wonder:

I'll say—a fisher, on the sand
By Tyre the old, with ocean-plunder,
A netful, brought to land.

Who has not heard how Tyrian shells
Enclosed the blue, that dye of dyes
Whereof one drop worked miracles,
And colored like Astarte's eyes
Raw silk the merchant sells?

And each bystander of them all
Could criticise, and quote tradition

How depths of blue sublimed some pall
 —To get which, pricked a king's ambition;
 Worth sceptre, crown and ball.

Yet there 's the dye, in that rough mesh,
 The sea has only just o'er-whispered!
 Live welks, each lip's beard dripping fresh,
 As if they still the water's lisp heard
 Through foam the rock-weeds thresh.

Enough to furnish Solomon
 Such hangings for his cedar-house,
 That, when gold-robed he took the throne

In that abyss of blue, the Spouse
 Might swear his presence shone

Most like the centre-spike of gold
 Which burns deep in the bluebell's womb

What time, with ardors manifold,
 The bee goes singing to her groom,
 Drunken and overbold.

Mere conches! not fit for warp or woof!
 Till cunning come to pound and squeeze

And clarify,—refine to proof
 The liquor filtered by degrees,
 While the world stands aloof.

And there 's the extract, flaked and fine,

And priced and salable at last!
 And Hobbs, Nobbs, Stokes and Nokes
 combine

To paint the future from the past,
 Put blue into their line.

Hobbs hints blue,—straight he turtle
 eats:

Nobbs prints blue,—claret crowns his
 cup:

Nokes outdares Stokes in azure feats,—
 Both gorge. Who fished the murex
 up?

What porridge had John Keats?¹

1855.

THE PATRIOT

AN OLD STORY

It was roses, roses, all the way,
 With myrtle mixed in my path like
 mad:

¹ See Chesterton's *Life of Browning*, pp. 154-6.

The house-roofs seemed to heave and
 sway,

The church-spires flamed, such flags
 they had,
 A year ago on this very day.

The air broke into a mist with bells,
 The old walls rocked with the crowd
 and cries.

Had I said, "Good folk, mere noise re-
 pels—

But give me your sun from yonder
 skies!"

They had answered, "And afterward,
 what else?"

Alack, it was I who leaped at the sun
 To give it my loving friends to keep!
 Naught man could do, have I left un-
 done:

And you see my harvest, what I reap
 This very day, now a year is run.

There's nobody on the house-tops now—
 Just a palsied few at the windows set;
 For the best of the sight is, all allow,
 At the Shambles' Gate—or, better yet,
 By the very scaffold's foot, I throw.

I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
 A rope cuts both my wrists behind;
 And I think, by the feel, my forehead
 bleeds,

For they fling, whoever has a mind,
 Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

Thus I entered, and thus I go!

In triumphs, people have dropped
 down dead.

"Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
 Me?"—God might question; now in-
 stead,

'T is God shall repay: I am safer so.

1855.

A LIGHT WOMAN

So far as our story approaches the end,
 Which do you pity the most of us
 three?—

My friend, or the mistress of my friend
 With her wanton eyes, or me?

My friend was already too good to lose,
 And seemed in the way of improve-
 ment yet,

When she crossed his path with her
 hunting-noose,

And over him drew her net.

When I saw him tangled in her toils,
A shame, said I, if she adds just him
To her nine-and-ninety other spoils,
The hundredth for a whim!

And before my friend be wholly hers,
How easy to prove to him, I said,
An eagle's the game her pride prefers,
Though she snaps at a wren instead!

So, I gave her eyes my own eyes to take,
My hand sought hers as in earnest
need,

And round she turned for my noblesake,
And gave me herself indeed.

The eagle am I, with my fame in the
world,

The wren is he, with his maiden face.
—You look away and your lip is curled?
Patience, a moment's space!

For see, my friend goes shaking and
white;

He eyes me as the basilisk:
I have turned, it appears, his day to
night,
Eclipsing his sun's disk.

And I did it, he thinks, as a very thief:
"Though I love her—that, he compre-
hends—

One should master one's passions, (love,
in chief)
And be loyal to one's friends!"

And she,—she lies in my hand as tame
As a pear late basking over a wall;
Just a touch to try and off it came;
'T is mine,—can I let it fall?

With no mind to eat it, that's the worst!
Were it thrown in the road, would the
case assist?

'T was quenching a dozen blue-flies'
thirst
When I gave its stalk a twist.

And I,—what I seem to my friend, you
see:

What I soon shall seem to his love,
you guess:
What I seem to myself, do you ask of
me?
No hero, I confess.

'T is an awkward thing to play with
souls,
And matter enough to save one's own:

Yet think of my friend, and the burning
coals
He played with for bits of stone!

One likes to show the truth for the
truth;

That the woman was light is very
true:

But suppose she says,—Never mind that
youth,
What wrong have I done to you?

Well, anyhow, here the story stays,
So far at least as I understand;
And, Robert Browning, you writer of
plays,

Here's a subject made to your hand!
1855.

THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

I SAID—Then dearest, since 't is so,
Since now at length my fate I know,
Since nothing all my love avails,
Since all, my life seemed meant for,
fails,

Since this was written and needs must
be—

My whole heart rises up to bless
Your name in pride and thankfulness!
Take back the hope you gave,—I claim
Only a memory of the same,
—And this beside, if you will not blame,
Your leave for one more last ride with
me.

My mistress bent that brow of hers;
Those deep dark eyes where pride de-
murs

When pity would be softening through,
Fixed me a breathing-while or two
With life or death in the balance:
right!

The blood replenished me again;
My last thought was at least not vain:
I and my mistress, side by side
Shall be together, breathe and ride,
So, one day more am I deified.

Who knows but the world may end
to-night?

Hush! if you saw some western cloud
All billowy-bosomed, over-bowed
By many benedictions—sun's
And moon's and evening-star's at once—
And so, you, looking and loving best,
Conscious grew, your passion drew
Cloud, sunset, moonrise, star-shine too.
Down on you, near and yet more near.

Till flesh must fade for heaven was
here !—

Thus leant she and lingered—joy and
fear !

Thus lay she a moment on my breast.

Then we began to ride. My soul
Smoothed itself out, a long-cramped
scroll

Freshening and fluttering in the wind.
Past hopes already lay behind.

What need to strive with a life awry ?
Had I said that, had I done this ?

So might I gain, so might I miss.
Might she have loved me ? just as well

She might have hated, who can tell !
Where had I been now if the worst be-
fell ?

And here we are riding, she and I.

Fail I alone, in words and deeds ?

Why, all men strive, and who succeeds ?
We rode ; it seemed, my spirit flew,

Saw other regions, cities new,
As the world rushed by on either side.

I thought,—All labor, yet no less
Bear up beneath their unsuccess,

Look at the end of work, contrast
The petty done, the undone vast,

This present of theirs with the hopeful
past !

I hoped she would love me ; here we
ride.

What hand and brain went ever paired ?
What heart alike conceived and dared ?

What act proved all its thought had
been ?

What will but felt the fleshly screen ?
We ride and I see her bosom heave.

There's many a crown for us who can
reach.

Ten lines, a statesman's life in each !
The flag stuck on a heap of bones,

A soldier's doing ! what atones ?
They scratch his name on the Abbey-

stones.
My riding is better, by their leave.

What does it all mean, poet ? Well,
Your brains beat into rhythm, you tell

What we felt only ; you expressed
You hold things beautiful the best,

And place them in rhyme so, side by
side.

'Tis something, nay 'tis much ; but then,
Have you yourself what's best for men ?

Are you—poor, sick, old ere your time—
Nearer one whit your own sublime

Than we who never have turned a
rhyme ?

Sing, ride's a joy. For me, I ride.

And you, great sculptor—so, you gave
A score of years to Art, her slave,

And that's your Venus, whence we turn
To yonder girl that fords the burn !

You acquiesce, and shall I repine ?
What, man of music, you grown gray

With notes and nothing else to say,
Is this your sole praise from a friend,

“Greatly his opera's strains intend,
But in music we know how fashions

end !”
I gave my youth ; but we ride, in fine.

Who knows what's fit for us ? Had fate
Proposed bliss here should sublimate

My being—had I signed the bond—
Still one must lead some life beyond,

Have a bliss to die with, dim-described.
This foot once planted on the goal,

This glory-garland round my soul,
Could I descry such ? Try and test !

I sink back shuddering from the quest.
Earth being so good, would heaven

seem best ?
Now, heaven and she are beyond this
ride.

And yet—she has not spoke so long !
What if heaven be that, fair and strong

At life's best, with our eyes upturned
Whither life's flower is first discerned,

We, fixed so, ever should so abide ?
What if we still ride on, we two,

With life forever old yet new,
Changed not in kind but in degree,

The instant made eternity,—
And heaven just prove that I and she

Ride, ride together, forever ride ?
1855.

W

A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARN-
ING IN EUROPE

LET us begin and carry up this corpse,
Singing together.

Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar
thorpes

Each in its tether
Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain,

Cared-for till cock-crow :
Look out if yonder be not day again

Rimming the rock-row !
That's the appropriate country ; there,

man's thought,

Rarer, intenser,
 Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it
 ought,
 Chafes in the censer.
 Leave we the unlettered plain its herd
 and crop:
 Seek we sepulture
 On a tall mountain, citied to the top,
 Crowded with culture!
 All the peaks soar, but one the rest ex-
 cels;
 Clouds overcome it;
 No! yonder sparkle is the citadel's
 Circling its summit.
 Thither our path lies; wind we up the
 heights;
 Wait ye the warning?
 Our low life was the level's and the
 night's;
 He's for the morning.
 Step to a tune, square chests, erect each
 head,
 'Ware the beholders!
 This is our master, famous, calm and
 dead,
 Borne on our shoulders.

 Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling
 thorpe and croft,
 Safe from the weather!
 He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
 Singing together,
 He was a man born with thy face and
 throat,
 Lyric Apollo!
 Long he lived nameless: how should
 Spring take note
 Winter would follow?
 Till lo, the little touch, and youth was
 gone!
 Cramped and diminished,
 Moaned he, "New measures, other feet
 anon!
 My dance is finished?"
 No, that's the world's way: (keep the
 mountain-side,
 Make for the city!)
 He knew the signal, and stepped on with
 pride
 Over men's pity;
 Left play for work, and grappled with
 the world
 Bent on escaping:
 "What's in the scroll," quoth he, "thou
 keepest furl'd?
 Show me their shaping,
 Theirs who most studied man, the bard
 and sage,—
 Give!"—So, he gowned him,

Straight got by heart that book to its
 last page:
 Learned, we found him.
 Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes
 like lead,
 Accents uncertain:
 "Time to taste life," another would have
 said,
 "Up with the curtain!"
 This man said rather, "Actual life comes
 next?
 Patience a moment!
 Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed
 text,
 Still there's the comment.
 Let me know all! Prate not of most or
 least,
 Painful or easy!
 Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the
 feast,
 Ay, nor feel queasy."
 Oh, such a life as he resolved to live,
 When he had learned it,
 When he had gathered all books had to
 give!
 Sooner, he spurned it.
 Image the whole, then execute the
 parts—
 Fancy the fabric
 Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire
 from quartz,
 Ere mortar dab brick!

 (Here's the town-gate reached: there's
 the market-place
 Gaping before us.)
 Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace
 (Hearten our chorus!)
 That before living he'd learn how to
 live—
 No end to learning:
 Earn the means first—God surely will
 contrive
 Use for our earning.
 Others mistrust and say, "But time
 escapes:
 Live now or never!"
 He said, "What's time? Leave Now for
 dogs and apes!
 Man has Forever."
 Back to his book then: deeper drooped
 his head:
 Calculus racked him:
 Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of
 lead:
 Trussis attacked him.
 "Now, master, take a little rest!"—not
 he!
 (Caution redoubled,

Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly!)

Not a whit troubled,

Back to his studies, fresher than at first,

Fierce as a dragon

He (soul-hydropic with a sacred thirst)

Sucked at the flagon.

Oh, if we draw a circle premature,

Heedless of far gain,

Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure

Bad is our bargain!

Was it not great? did not he throw on God,

(He loves the burthen)—

God's task to make the heavenly period

Perfect the earthen?

Did not he magnify the mind, show clear

Just what it all meant?

He would not discount life, as fools do here,

Paid by instalment.

He ventured neck or nothing—heaven's success

Found, or earth's failure:

"Wilt thou trust death or not?" He answered "Yes!

Hence with life's pale lure!"

That low man seeks a little thing to do,

Sees it and does it:

This high man, with a great thing to pursue,

Dies ere he knows it.

That low man goes on adding one to one,

His hundred's soon hit:

This high man, aiming at a million,

Misses an unit.

That, has the world here—should he need the next,

Let the world mind him!

This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed

Seeking shall find him.

So, with the throttling hands of death at strife.

Ground he at grammar;

Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were rife:

While he could stammer

He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be!—

Properly based *Oun*—

Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*, Dead from the waist down.

Well, here's the platform, here's the proper place:

Hail to your purlieus,

All ye highfliers of the feathered race, Swallows and curlews! [low

Here's the top-peak; the multitude be—Live, for they can, there:

This man decided not to Live but Know—

Bury this man there?

Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot, clouds form,

Lightnings are loosened,

Stars come and go! Let joy break with the storm,

Peace let the dew send!

Lofty designs must close in like effects:

Loftily lying,

Leave him—still loftier than the world suspects,

Living and dying. 1855.

THE STATUE AND THE BUST

THERE'S a palace in Florence, the world knows well,

And a statue watches it from the square.

And this story of both do our townsmen tell.

Ages ago, a lady there,

At the farthest window facing the East

Asked, "Who rides by with the royal air!"

The bridesmaids' prattle around her ceased;

She leaned forth, one on either hand;

They saw how the blush of the bride increased—

They felt by its beats her heart expand—

As one at each ear and both in a breath

Whispered, "The Great-Duke Ferdinand."

That selfsame instant, underneath,

The Duke rode past in his idle way,

Empty and fine like a swordless sheath,

Gay he rode, with a friend as gay,

Till he threw his head back—"Who is she?"

—"A bride the Riccardi brings home to-day."

Hair in heaps lay heavily

Over a pale brow spirit-pure—

Carved like the heart of the coal-black tree,

Crisped like a war steed's encolure—

And vainly sought to dissemble her eyes

Of the blackest black our eyes endure,

And lo, a blade for a knight's emprise

Filled the fine empty sheath of a man,—

The Duke grew straightway brave and wise.

He looked at her as a lover can ;
 She looked at him, as one who awakes :
 The past was a sleep, and her life began.

Now, love so ordered for both their
 sakes,
 A feast was held that selfsame night
 In the pile which the mighty shadow
 makes.

(For Via Larga is three-parts light,
 But the palace overshadows one,
 Because of a crime, which may God re-
 quire !

To Florence and God the wrong was
 done,
 Through the first republic's murder there
 By Cosimo and his cursed son.)

The Duke (with the statue's face in the
 square)
 Turned in the midst of his multitude
 At the bright approach of the bridal
 pair.

Face to face the lovers stood
 A single minute and no more
 While the bridegroom bent as a man sub-
 dued—

Bowed till his bonnet brushed the floor—
 For the Duke on the lady a kiss con-
 ferred,
 As the courtly custom was of yore.

In a minute can lovers exchange a word ?
 If a word did pass, which I do not think,
 Only one out of a thousand heard.

That was the bridegroom. At day's
 brink
 He and his bride were alone at last
 In a bed chamber by a taper's blink.

Calmly he said that her lot was cast,
 That the door she had passed was shut
 on her
 Till the final catafalk repassed.

The world meanwhile, its noise and stir,
 Through a certain window facing the
 East
 She could watch like a convent's chroni-
 cler.

Since passing the door might lead to a
 feast,
 And a feast might lead to so much be-
 side,
 He, of many evils, chose the least.

"Freely I choose too," said the bride—
 "Your window and its world suffice,"
 Replied the tongue, while the heart
 replied—

"If I spend the night with that devil
 twice,
 May his window serve as my loop of hell
 Whence a damned soul looks on para-
 dise !

"I fly to the Duke who loves me well,
 Sit by his side and laugh at sorrow
 Ere I count another ave-bell.

"T is only the coat of a page to borrow,
 And tie my hair in a horse-boy's trim,
 And I save my soul—but not to-mor-
 row—"

(She checked herself and her eye grew
 dim)

"My father tarries to bless my state :
 I must keep it one day more for him.

"Is one day more so long to wait ?
 Moreover the Duke rides past, I know ;
 We shall see each other, sure as fate."

She turned on her side and slept. Just
 so !

So we resolve on a thing and sleep :
 So did the lady, ages ago.

That night the Duke said, "Dear or
 cheap
 As the cost of this cup of bliss may
 prove
 To body or soul, I will drain it deep."

And on the morrow, bold with love,
 He beckoned the bridegroom (close on
 call,
 As his duty bade, by the Duke's alcove)

And smiled "'T was a very funeral,
 Your lady will think, this feast of
 ours,—
 A shame to efface whate'er befall !

"What if we break from the Arno bow-
 ers,
 And try if Petraja, cool and green,
 Cure last night's faults with this morn-
 ing's flowers?"

The bridegroom, ~~not~~ a thought to be
 seen
 On his steady brow and quiet mouth,
 Said, "Too much favor for me so mean !

"But alas! my lady leaves the South;
Each wind that comes from the Apennine
Is a menace to her tender youth:

"Nor a way exists, the wise opine,
If she quits her palace twice this year,
To avert the flower of life's decline."

Quoth the Duke, "A sage and a kindly
fear.
Moreover Petraja is cold this spring:
Be our feast to-night as usual here!"

And then to himself—"Which night
shall bring
Thy bride to her lover's embraces, fool—
Or I am the fool, and thou art the king!

"Yet my passion must wait a night, nor
cool—
For to-night the Envoy arrives from
France
Whose heart I unlock with thyself, my
tool.

"I need thee still and might miss per-
chance.
To-day is not wholly lost, beside,
With its hope of my lady's countenance:

"For I ride—what should I do but ride?
And passing her palace, if I list,
May glance at its window—well betide!"

So said, so done: nor the lady missed
One ray that broke from the ardent
brow,
Nor a curl of the lips where the spirit
kissed.

Be sure that each renewed the vow,
No morrow's sun should arise and set
And leave them then as it left them
now.

But next day passed, and next day yet,
With still fresh cause to wait one day
more
Ere each leaped over the parapet.

And still, as love's brief morning wore,
With a gentle start, half smile, half sigh,
They found love not as it seemed before.

They thought it would work infallibly,
But not in despite of heaven and earth:
The rose would blow when the storm
passed by.

Meantime they could profit in winter's
dearth
By store of fruits that supplant the rose:
The world and its ways have a certain
worth:

And to press a point while these oppose
Were simple policy; better wait:
We lose no friends and we gain no foes.

Meantime, worse fates than a lover's
fate,
Who daily may ride and pass and look
Where his lady watches behind the
grate!

And she—she watched the square like a
book
Holding one picture and only one,
Which daily to find she undertook:

When the picture was reached the book
was done,
And she turned from the picture at
night to scheme
Of tearing it out for herself next sun.

So weeks grew months, years; gleam by
gleam
The glory dropped from their youth and
love,
And both perceived they had dreamed a
dream;

Which hovered as dreams do, still
above:
But who can take a dream for a truth?
Oh, hide our eyes from the next remove!

One day as the lady saw her youth
Depart, and the silver thread that
streaked
Her hair, and, worn by the serpent's
tooth,

The brow so puckered, the chin so
peaked,—
And wondered who the woman was,
Hollow-eyed and haggard-cheeked,

Fronting her silent in the glass—
"Summon here," she suddenly said,
"Before the rest of my old self pass,

"Him, the Carver, a hand to aid,
Who fashions the clay no love will
change,
And fixes a beauty never to fade.

"Let Robbia's craft so apt and strange
Arrest the remains of young and fair,
And rivet them while the seasons range.

"Make me a face on the window there,
Waiting as ever, mute the while,
My love to pass below in the square!

"And let me think that it may beguile
Dreary days which the dead must spend
Down in their darkness under the aisle,

"To say, 'What matters it at the end?
I did no more while my heart was warm
Than does that image, my pale-faced
friend.'

"Where is the use of the lip's red
charm,
The heaven of hair, the pride of the
brow,
And the blood that blues the inside
arm—

"Unless we turn, as the soul knows how,
The earthly gift to an end divine?
A lady of clay is as good, I trow."

But long ere Robbia's cornice, fine,
With flowers and fruits which leaves en-
lace,
Was set, where now is the empty shrine—

(And, leaning out of a bright blue space,
As a ghost might lean from a chink of
sky,
The passionate pale lady's face—

Eying ever, with earnest eye
And quick-turned neck at its breathless
stretch,
Some one who ever is passing by—)

The duke had sighed like the simplest
wretch
In Florence, "Youth—my dream es-
capes!

Will its record stay?" And he bade
them fetch

Some subtle moulder of brazen shapes—
"Can the soul, the will, die out of a
man
Ere his body find the grave that gapes?

"John of Douay shall effect my plan,
Set me on horseback here aloft,
Alive, as the crafty sculptor can,

"In the very square I have crossed so
oft:

That men may admire, when future suns
Shall touch the eyes to a purpose soft,

"While the mouth and the brow stay
brave in bronze—
Admire and say, 'When he was alive
How he would take his pleasure once!'

"And it shall go hard but I contrive
To listen the while, and laugh in my
tomb
At idleness which aspires to strive."

So! While these wait the trump of
doom,
How do their spirits pass, I wonder,
Nights and days in the narrow room?

Still, I suppose, they sit and ponder
What a gift life was, ages ago,
Six steps out of the chapel yonder.

Only they see not God, I know,
Nor all that chivalry of his,
The soldier-saints who, row on row,

Burn upward each to his point of bliss—
Since, the end of life being manifest,
He had burned his way through the
world to this.

I hear you reproach, "But delay was
best,
For their end was a crime."—Oh, a crime
will do
As well, I reply, to serve for a test,

As a virtue golden through and through,
Sufficient to vindicate itself
And prove its worth at a moment's
view!

Must a game be played for the sake of
pelf?
Where a button goes, 't were an epigram
To offer the stamp of the very Guelph.

The true has no value beyond the sham;
As well the counter as coin, I submit,
When your table's a hat, and your prize,
a dram.

Stake your counter as boldly every whit,
Venture as warily, use the same skill,
Do your best, whether winning or losing
it,

If you choose to play !—is my principle.
Let a man contend to the uttermost
For his life's set prize, be it what it will !

The counter our lovers staked was lost
As surely as if it were lawful coin :
And the sin I impute to each frustrate
ghost

Is—the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,
Though the end in sight was a vice, I
say.

You of the virtue (we issue join)
How strive you? *De te, fabula!*

1855.

“CHILDE ROLAND TO THE DARK TOWER CAME”

See Edgar's song in *Lear*.

My first thought was, he lied in every
word,

That hoary cripple, with malicious eye
Askance to watch the working of his
lie

On mine, and mouth scarce able to afford
Suppression of the glee, that pursed and
scored

Its edge, at one more victim gained
thereby.

What else should he be set for, with his
staff?

What, save to waylay with his lies,
eusnare

All travellers who might find him
posted there,

And ask the road? I guessed what
skull-like laugh

Would break, what crutch 'gin write
my epitaph

For pastime in the dusty thorough-
fare,

If at his counsel I should turn aside
Into that ominous tract which, all
agree,

Hides the Dark Tower. Yet acquies-
cingly

I did turn as he pointed : neither pride
Nor hope rekindling at the end descried,
So much as gladness that some end
might be.

For, what with my whole world-wide
wandering,

What with my search drawn out
through years, my hope

Dwindled into a ghost not fit to cope

41

With that obstreperous joy success
would bring,—

I hardly tried now to rebuke the spring
My heart made, finding failure in its
scope.

As when a sick man very near to death
Seems dead indeed, and feels begin
and end

The tears, and takes the farewell of each
friend,

And hears one bid the other go, draw
breath

Freelier outside, (“since all is o’er,” he
saith,

“And the blow fallen no grieving can
amend;”)

While some discuss if near the other
graves

Be room enough for this, and when a
day

Suits best for carrying the corpse away,
With care about the banners, scarves
and staves:

And still the man hears all, and only
craves

He may not shame such tender love
and stay.

Thus, I had so long suffered in this quest,
Heard failure prophesied so oft, been
writ

So many times among “The Band”—
to wit,

The knights who to the Dark Tower's
search addressed

Their steps—that just to fail as they,
seemed best,

And all the doubt was now—should I
be fit?

So, quiet as despair, I turned from him,
That hateful cripple, out of his high-
way

Into the path he pointed. All the day
Had been a dreary one at best, and dim
Was settling to its close, yet shot one
grim

Red leer to see the plain catch its
estrays.

For mark ! no sooner was I fairly found
Pledged to the plain, after a pace or
two,

Than, pausing to throw backward a
last view

O'er the safe road, 't was gone ; gray
plain all round :

Nothing but plain to the horizon's bound.
I might go on ; naught else remained
to do.

So, on I went. I think I never saw
Such starved ignoble nature ; nothing
throve :

For flowers—as well expect a cedar
grove !

But cockle, spurge, according to their
law

Might propagate their kind, with none
to awe,

You 'd think : a burr had been a treas-
ure trove.

No ! penury, inertness and grimace,
In some strange sort, were the land's
portion. " See

Or shut your eyes," said Nature peev-
ishly,

" It nothing skills : I cannot help my
case :

'T is the Last Judgment's fire must cure
this place,

Calcine its clods and set my prisoners
free."

If there pushed any ragged thistle-stalk
Above its mates, the head was chop-
ped ; the bents

Were jealous else. What made those
holes and rents

In the dock's harsh swarth leaves,
bruised as to balk

All hope of greenness ? 't is a brute
must walk

Pashing their life out, with a brute's
intent.

As for the grass, it grew as scant as hair
In leprosy ; thin dry blades pricked
the mud

Which underneath looked kneaded up
with blood.

One stiff blind horse, his every bone a-
stare,

Stood stupefied, however he came there :
Thrust out past service from the
devil's stud !

Alive ? he might be dead for aught I
know,

With that red gaunt and colloped neck
a-strain,

And shut eyes underneath the rusty
mane ;

Seldom went such grotesqueness with
such woe ;

I never saw a brute I hated so ;
He must be wicked to deserve such
pain.

I shut my eyes and turned them on my
heart.

As a man calls for wine before he
fights,

I asked one draught of earlier, happier
sights,

Ere fitly I could hope to play my part.

Think first, fight afterwards—the sol-
dier's art :

One taste of the old time sets all to
rights.

Not it ! I fancied Cuthbert's reddening
face

Beneath its garniture of curly gold,
Dear fellow, till I almost felt him told

An arm in mine to fix me to the place,
That way he used. Alas, one night's
disgrace !

Out went my heart's new fire and left
it cold.

Giles then, the soul of honor—there he
stands

Frank as ten years ago when knighted
first.

What honest man should dare (he
said) he durst.

Good—but the scene shifts—faugh !
what hangman hands

Pin to his breast a parchment ? His
own bands

Read it. Poor traitor, spit upon and
curst !

Better this present than a past like that ;
Back therefore to my darkening path
again !

No sound, no sight as far as eye could
strain.

Will the night send a howlet or a bat ?

I asked : when something on the dismal
flat

Came to arrest my thoughts and
change their train.

A sudden little river crossed my path
As unexpected as a serpent comes.

No sluggish tide congenial to the
glooms ;

This, as it frothed by, might have been a
bath

For the fiend's glowing hoof—to see the
wrath

Of its black eddy bespate with flakes
and spumes.

So petty, yet so spiteful! All along,
 Low scrubby alders kneeled down
 over it;
 Drenched willows flung them head-
 long in a fit
 Of mute despair, a suicidal throng:
 The river which had done them all the
 wrong,
 Whate'er that was, rolled by, deterred
 no whit.

Which, while I forded,—good saints,
 how I feared
 To set my foot upon a dead man's
 cheek,
 Each step, or feel the spear I thrust to
 seek
 For hollows, tangled in his hair or beard!
 —It may have been a water-rat I speared,
 But, ugh, it sounded like a baby's
 shriek.

Glad was I when I reached the other
 bank.
 Now for a better country. Vain
 presage!
 Who were the strugglers, what war
 did they wage,
 Whose savage trample thus could pad
 the dank
 Soil to a plash? Toads in a poisoned
 tank,
 Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage—

The fight must so have seemed in that
 fell cirque.
 What penned them there, with all the
 plain to choose?
 No footprint leading to that horrid
 mews,
 None out of it. Mad brewage set to
 work
 Their brains, no doubt, like galley-
 slaves the Turk
 Pits for his pastime, Christians against
 Jews.

And more than that—a furlong on—
 why, there!
 What bad use was that engine for,
 that wheel,
 Or brake, not wheel—that harrow fit
 to reel [air
 Men's bodies out like silk? with all the
 Of Tophet's tool, on earth left unaware.
 Or brought to sharpen its rusty teeth
 of steel.

Then came a bit of stubbed ground,
 once a wood,

Next a marsh, it would seem, and now
 mere earth
 Desperate and done with: (so a fool
 finds mirth,
 Makes a thing and then mars it, till his
 mood
 Changes and off he goes!) within a rood—
 Bog, clay and rubble, sand and stark
 black dearth.

Now blotches rankling, colored gay and
 grim,
 Now patches where some leanness of
 the soil's
 Broke into moss or substances like
 boils;
 Then came some palsied oak, a cleft in
 him
 Like a distorted mouth that splits its rim
 Gaping at death, and dies while it
 recoils.

And just as far as ever from the end!
 Naught in the distance but the even-
 ing, naught
 To point my footstep further! At
 the thought,
 A great black bird, Apollyon's bosom-
 friend,
 Sailed past, nor beat his wide wing
 dragon-penned
 That brushed my cap—perchance the
 guide I sought.

For, looking up, aware I somehow grew,
 'Spite of the dusk, the plain had given
 place
 All round to mountains—with such
 name to grace
 Mere ugly heights and heaps now stolen
 in view.
 How thus they had surprised me,—
 solve it, you!
 How to get from them was no clearer
 case.

Yet half I seemed to recognize some
 trick
 Of mischief happened to me, God
 knows when—
 In a bad dream perhaps. Here ended,
 then, [nick
 Progress this way. When, in the very
 Of giving up, one time more, came a
 click [the den!
 As when a trap shuts—you're inside

Burningly it came on me all at once,
 This was the place! those two hills on
 the right,

Crouched like two bulls locked horn
in horn in fight;
While to the left, a tall scalped mountain
... Duncce,
Dotard, a-dozing at the very nonce,
After a life spent training for the
sight!

What in the midst lay but the Tower
itself?
The round squat turret, blind as the
fool's heart,
Built of brown stone, without a coun-
terpart
In the whole world. The tempest's
mocking elf
Points to the shipman thus the unseen
shelf
He strikes on, only when the timbers
start.

Not see? because of night perhaps?—
why, day
Came back again for that! before it
left
The dying sunset kindled through a
cleft:
The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay,
Chin upon hand, to see the game at
bay,—
“Now stab and end the creature—to
the heft!”

Not hear? when noise was everywhere!
it tolled
Increasing like a bell. Names in my
ears,
Of all the lost adventurers my peers,—
How such a one was strong, and such
was bold,
And such was fortunate, yet each of old
Lost, lost! one moment knelled the
woe of years.

There they stood, ranged along the hill-
sides, met
To view the last of me, a living frame
For one more picture! in a sheet of
flame
I saw them and I knew them all. And
yet
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
And blew: “*Childe Roland to the
Dark Tower came.*” 1855.

FRA LIPPO LIPPI

I AM poor brother Lippo, by your leave!
You need not clap your torches to my
face.

Zooks, what 's to blame? you think you
see a monk!

What, 't is past midnight, and you go
the rounds,
And here you catch me at an alley's end
Where sportive ladies leave their doors
ajar?

The Carmine's my cloister: hunt it up,
Do,—harry out, if you must show your
zeal,

Whatever rat, there, haps on his wrong
hole,

And nip each softling of a wee white
mouse,

Weke, weke, that 's crept to keep him
company!

Aha, you know your betters! Then,
you 'll take

Your hand away that 's fiddling on my
throat.

And please to know me likewise. Who
am I?

Why, one, sir, who is lodging with a
friend

Three streets off—he's a certain... how
d' ye call?

Master—a... Cosimo of the Medici.
I' the house that caps the corner. Boh!
you were best!

Remember and tell me, the day you 're
hanged,

How you affected such a gullet's-gripe!

But you, sir, it concerns you that your
knaves

Pick up a manner nor discredit you:

Zooks, are we pilchards, that they sweep
the streets

And count fair prize what comes into
their net?

He 's Judas to a tittle, that man is!

Just such a face! Why, sir, you make
amends.

Lord, I 'm not angry! Bid your hang-
dogs go

Drink out this quarter-florin to the
health

Of the munificent House that harbors
me

(And many more beside, lads! more
beside!)

And all 's come square again. I 'd like
his face—

His, elbowing on his comrade in this
door

With the pike and lantern,—for the
slave that holds

John Baptist's head a-dangle by the hair
With one hand (“Look you, now,” as
who should say)

And his weapon in the other, yet unwiped !

It's not your chance to have a bit of chalk,

A wood-coal or the like? or you should see !

Yes, I'm the painter, since you style me so.

What, brother Lippo's doings, up and down

You know them and they take you? like enough !

I saw the proper twinkle in your eye—
"Tell you, I liked your looks at very first.

Let's sit and set things straight now, hip to haunch.

Here's spring come, and the nights one makes up bands

To roam the town and sing our carnival, And I've been three weeks shut within my mew,

A-painting for the great man, saints and saints

And saints again. I could not paint all night—

Ouf ! I leaned out of window for fresh air.

There came a hurry of feet and little feet,

A sweep of lute strings, laughs, and whiffs of song,—

Flower o' the broom,

Take away love, and our earth is a tomb!

Flower o' the quince,

I let Lisa go, and what good in life since?

Flower o' the thyme—and so on. Round they went.

Scarce had they turned the corner when a titter

Like the skipping of rabbits by moonlight,—three slim shapes,

And a face that looked up . . . zooks, sir, flesh and blood,

That's all I'm made of ! Into shreds it went,

Curtain and counterpane and coverlet, All the bed-furniture—a dozen knots,

There was a ladder ! Down I let myself, Hands and feet, scrambling somehow,

and so dropped,

And after them. I came up with the fun

Hard by Saint Laurence, hail fellow, well met,—

Flower o' the rose,

If I've been merry, what matter who

knows?

And so as I was stealing back again

To get to bed and have a bit of sleep

Ere I rise up to-morrow and go work
On Jerome knocking at his poor old breast

With his great round stone to subdue the flesh,

You snap me of the sudden. Ah, I see !
Though your eye twinkles still, you shake your head—

Mine's shaved—a monk, you say—the sting's in that !

If Master Cosimo announced himself, Mum's the word naturally ; but a monk !

Come, what am I a beast for ? tell us, now !

I was a baby when my mother died
And father died and left me in the street.

I starved there, God knows how, a year or two

On fig-skins, melon-parings, rinds and shucks,

Refuse and rubbish. One fine frosty day,

My stomach being empty as your hat,
The wind doubled me up and down I went.

Old Aunt Lapaccia trussed me with one hand,

(Its fellow was a stinger as I knew)
And so along the wall, over the bridge,

By the straight cut to the convent. Six words there,

While I stood munching my first bread that month :

"So, boy, you're minded," quoth the good fat father,

Wiping his own mouth, 't was refection-time,—

"To quit this very miserable world ?
Will you renounce" . . . "the mouthful of bread ?" thought I ;

By no means ! Brief, they made a monk of me ;

I did renounce the world, its pride and greed,

Palace, farm, villa, shop, and banking-house,

Trash, such as these poor devils of Medici

Have given their hearts to—all at eight years old.

Well, sir, I found in time, you may be sure,

'T was not for nothing—the good bellyful,
The warm serge and the rope that goes all round,

And day-long blessed idleness beside !
"Let's see what the urchin's fit for"

—that came next.

Not overmuch their way, I must confess.

Such a to-do ! They tried me with their
books ;
Lord, they 'd have taught me Latin in
pure waste !

Flower o' the clove,
All the Latin I construe is " amo," I
love !

But, mind you, when a boy starves in
the streets

Eight years together, as my fortune was,
Watching folk's faces to know who will
fling

The bit of half-stripped grape-bunch he
desires,

And who will curse or kick him for his
pains,—

Which gentleman processional and fine,
Holding a candle to the Sacrament,
Will wink and let him lift a plate and
catch

The droppings of the wax to sell again,
Or holla for the Eight and have him
whipped,—

How say I?—nay, which dog bites,
which lets drop

His bone from the heap of offal in the
street,—

Why, soul and sense of him grow sharp
alike,

He learns the look of things, and none
the less

For admonition from the hunger-pinch.
I had a store of such remarks, be sure,
Which, after I found leisure, turned to
use.

I drew men's faces on my copy-books,
Scrawled them within the antiphony's
marge,

Joined legs and arms to the long music-
notes,

Found eyes and nose and chin for A's
and B's,

And made a string of pictures of the
world

Betwixt the ins and outs of verb and
noun,

On the wall, the bench, the door. The
monks looked black.

"Nay," quoth the Prior, "turn him
out, d'ye say ?

In no wise. Lose a crow and catch a
lark.

What if at last we get our man of parts,
We Carmelites, like those Camaldolese
And Preaching Friars, to do our church
up fine

And put the front on it that ought to
be !"

And hereupon he bade me daub away.

Thank you ! my head being crammed,
the walls a blank,

Never was such prompt disemburdening.
First, every sort of monk, the black and
white,

I drew them, fat and lean : then, folk
at church,

From good old gossips waiting to confess
Their cribs of barrel-droppings, candle-
ends,—

To the breathless fellow at the altar-foot,
Fresh from his murder, safe and sitting
there

With the little children round him in a
row

Of admiration, half for his beard and
half

For that white anger of his victim's son
Shaking a fist at him with one fierce
arm,

Signing himself with the other because
of Christ

(Whose sad face on the cross sees only
this

After the passion of a thousand years)
Till some poor girl, her apron o'er her
head,

(Which the intense eyes looked through)
came at eve

On tiptoe, said a word, dropped in a loaf,
Her pair of earrings and a bunch of
flowers

(The brute took growling), prayed, and
so was gone.

I painted all, then cried " 'T is ask and
have ;

Choose, for more's ready !" —laid the
ladder flat,

And showed my covered bit of cloister-
wall,

The monks closed in a circle and praised
loud

Till checked, taught what to see and not
to see,

Being simple bodies,—"That's the very
man !

Look at the boy who stoops to pat the
dog !

That woman's like the Prior's niece who
comes

To care about his asthma : it's the life !"
But there my triumph's straw-fire flared

and fumed ;
Their betters took their turn to see and
say :

The Prior and the learned pulled a face
And stopped all that in no time. "How ?

what's here ? [us all !

Quite from the mark of painting, bless

The Prior's niece . . . patron-saint—is
it so pretty
You can't discover if it means hope,
fear,
Sorrow or joy? won't beauty go with
these?
Suppose I've made her eyes all right
and blue,
Can't I take breath and try to add life's
flash,
And then add soul and heighten them
three-fold?
Or say there's beauty with no soul at
all—
(I never saw it—put the case the same—)
If you get simple beauty and naught else,
You get about the best thing God in-
vents:
That's somewhat: and you'll find the
soul you have missed,
Within yourself, when you return him
thanks.
"Rub all out!" Well, well, there's my
life, in short,
And so the thing has gone on ever since.
I'm grown a man no doubt, I've broken
bounds:
You should not take a fellow eight years
old
And make him swear to never kiss the
girls.
I'm my own master, paint now as I
please—
Having a friend, you see, in the Corner-
house!
Lord, it's fast holding by the rings in
front—
Those great rings serve more purposes
than just
To plant a flag in, or tie up a horse!
And yet the old schooling sticks, the old
grave eyes
Are peeping o'er my shoulder as I work,
The heads shake still—"It's art's de-
cline, my son!
You're not of the true painters, great
and old;
Brother Angelico's the man, you'll find;
Brother Lorenzo stands his single peer:
Fag on at flesh, you'll never make the
third!"
Flower o' the pine,
You keep your mistr . . . manners, and
I'll stick to mine!
I'm not the third, then: bless us, they
must know!
Don't you think they're the likeliest to
know, [my rage,
They with their Latin? So, I swallow

Clench my teeth, suck my lips in tight,
 and paint
 To please them—sometimes do and some-
 times don't;
 For, doing most, there's pretty sure to
 come
 A turn, some warm eve finds me at my
 saints—
 A laugh, a cry, the business of the
 world—
(Flower o' the Peach,
Death for us all, and his own life for
each!)
 And my whole soul revolves, the cup
 runs over,
 The world and life's too big to pass for
 a dream,
 And I do these wild things in sheer
 despite,
 And play the fooleries you catch me at,
 In pure rage! The old mill-horse, out
 at grass
 After hard years, throws up his stiff
 heels so,
 Although the miller does not preach to
 him
 The only good of grass is to make chaff.
 What would men have? Do they like
 grass or no—
 May they or may n't they? all I want's
 the thing
 Settled forever one way. As it is,
 You tell too many lies and hurt your-
 self:
 You don't like what you only like too
 much,
 You do like what, if given you at your
 word,
 You find abundantly detestable.
 For me, I think I speak as I was taught;
 I always see the garden and God there
 A-making man's wife: and, my lesson
 learned,
 The value and significance of flesh,
 I can't unlearn ten minutes afterwards.

You understand me: I'm a beast, I
 know.
 But see, now—why, I see as certainly
 As that the morning-star's about to
 shine,
 What will hap some day. We've a
 youngster here
 Comes to our convent, studies what I do,
 Slouches and stares and lets no atom
 drop:
 His name is Guidi—he'll not mind the
 monks— [talk—
 They call him Hulking Tom, he lets them

He picks my practice up—he'll paint
 apace.
 I hope so—though I never live so long,
 I know what's sure to follow. You be
 judge!
 You speak no Latin more than I, belike;
 However, you're my man, you've seen
 the world
 —The beauty and the wonder and the
 power,
 The shapes of things, their colors, lights
 and shades,
 Changes, surprises,—and God made it
 all!
 —For what? Do you feel thankful, ay
 or no,
 For this fair town's face, yonder river's
 line,
 The mountain round it and the sky above,
 Much more the figures of man, woman,
 child,
 These are the frame to? What's it all
 about?
 To be passed over, despised? or dwelt
 upon,
 Wondered at? oh, this last of course!—
 you say.
 But why not do as well as say,—paint
 these
 Just as they are, careless what comes of
 it?
 God's works—paint any one, and count
 it crime
 To let a truth slip. Don't object, "His
 works
 Are here already; nature is complete:
 Suppose you reproduce her—(which you
 can't)
 There's no advantage! you must beat
 her, then."
 For, don't you mark? we're made so
 that we love
 First when we see them painted, things
 we have passed
 Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to
 see;
 And so they are better, painted—better
 to us,
 Which is the same thing. Art was
 given for that;
 God uses us to help each other so,
 Lending our minds out. Have you no-
 ticed, now,
 Your cullion's hanging face? A bit of
 chalk,
 And trust me but you should, though!
 How much more,
 If I drew higher things with the same
 truth!

That were to take the Prior's pulpit-
place,
Interpret God to all of you! Oh, oh,
It makes me mad to see what men shall
do
And we in our graves! This world's
no blot for us,
Nor blank; it means intensely, and
means good:
To find its meaning is my meat and
drink.
"Ay, but you don't so instigate to
prayer!"
Strikes in the Prior: "when your mean-
ing's plain
It does not say to folk—remember
matins,
Or, mind you fast next Friday!" Why,
for this
What need of art at all? A skull and
bones,
Two bits of stick nailed crosswise, or,
what's best,
A bell to chime the hour with, does as
well.
I painted a Saint Laurence six months
since
At Prato, splashed the fresco in fine
style:
"How looks my painting, now the scaf-
fold's down?"
I ask a brother: "Hugely," he returns—
"Already not one phiz of your three
slaves
Who turn the Deacon off his toasted
side,
But 's scratched and prodded to our
heart's content,
The pious people have so eased their own
With coming to say prayers there in a
rage:
We get on fast to see the bricks beneath.
Expect another job this time next year,
For pity and religion grow i' the
crowd—
Your painting serves its purpose!"
Hang the fools!

—That is—you 'll not mistake an idle
word
Spoke in a huff by a poor monk, God
wot,
Tasting the air this spicy night which
turns
The unaccustomed head like Chianti
wine!
Oh, the church knows! don't misreport
me, now!
It's natural a poor monk out of bounds

Should have his apt word to excuse
himself:
And harken how I plot to make
amends.
I have bethought me: I shall paint a
piece
... There's for you! Give me six
months, then go, see
Something in Sant' Ambrogio's! Bless
the nuns!
They want a cast o' my office. I shall
paint
God in the midst, Madonna and her babe,
Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel-
brood,
Lilies and vestments and white faces,
sweet
As puff on puff of grated orris-root
When ladies crowd to Church at mid-
summer.
And then i' the front, of course a saint
or two—
Saint John, because he saves the Flo-
rentines,
Saint Ambrose, who puts down in black
and white
The convent's friends and gives them a
long day,
And Job, I must have him there past
mistake,
The man of Uz (and Us without the z,
Painters who need his patience). Well,
all these
Secured at their devotion, up shall come
Out of a corner when you least expect,
As one by a dark stair into a great light,
Music and talking, who but Lippo!
I!—
Mazed, motionless, and moonstruck—
I'm the man!
Back I shrink—what is this I see and
hear?
I, caught up with my monk's-things by
mistake,
My old serge gown and rope that goes
all-round,
I, in this presence, this pure company!
Where's a hole, where's a corner for
escape?
Then steps a sweet angelic slip of a thing
Forward, puts out a soft palm—"Not so
fast!"
—Addresses the celestial presence,
"nay—
He made you and devised you, after all,
Though he's none of you! Could Saint
John there draw—
His camel-hair make up a painting-
brush?

'We come to brother Lippo for all that,
Iste perfect opus!' So, all smile—
 I shuffle sideways with my blushing face
 Under the cover of a hundred wings
 Thrown like a spread of kirtles when
 you're gay

And play hot cockles, all the doors being
 shut,

Till, wholly unexpected, in there pops
 The hothead husband! Thus I scuttle
 off

To some safe bench behind, not letting
 go

The palm of her, the little lily thing
 That spoke the good word for me in the
 nick,

Like the Prior's niece . . . Saint Lucy,
 I would say,

And so all's saved for me, and for the
 church

A pretty picture gained. Go, six months
 hence!

Your hand, sir, and good-by: no lights,
 no lights!

The street's hushed, and I know my
 own way back,

Don't fear me! There's the gray be-
 ginning. Zooks! 1855.

ANDREA DEL SARTO

CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

BUT do not let us quarrel any more,
 No, my Lucrezia; bear with me for
 once:

Sit down and all shall happen as you
 wish.

You turn your face, but does it bring
 your heart?

I'll work then for your friend's friend,
 never fear,

Treat his own subject after his own way,
 Fix his own time, accept too his own
 price,

And shut the money into this small hand
 When next it takes mine. Will it?

tenderly?

Oh, I'll content him,—but to-morrow,
 Love!

I often am much wearier than you think,
 This evening more than usual, and it
 seems

As if—forgive now—should you let me
 sit

Here by the window with your hand in
 mine

And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,
 Both of one mind, as married people use,

Quietly, quietly the evening through,
 I might get up to-morrow to my work
 Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
 To-morrow, how you shall be glad for
 this!

Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
 And mine the man's bared breast she
 curls inside.

Don't count the time lost, neither; you
 must serve

For each of the five pictures we require:
 It saves a model. So! keep looking so—
 My serpentine beauty, rounds on
 rounds!

—How could you ever prick those per-
 fect ears,

Even to put the pearl there! oh, so
 sweet—

My face, my moon, my everybody's
 moon,

Which everybody looks on and calls his,
 And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
 While she looks—no one's: very dear,
 no less.

You smile? why, there's my picture
 ready made,

There's what we painters call our har-
 mony!

A common grayness silver everything,—
 All in a twilight, you and I alike

—You, at the point of your first pride in
 me

(That's gone you know),—but I, at
 every point;

My youth, my hope, my art, being all
 toned down

To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole.

There's the bell clinking from the chapel-
 top;

That length of convent-wall across the-
 way

Holds the trees safer, huddled more in-
 side;

The last monk leaves the garden; days
 decrease,

And autumn grows, autumn in every
 thing,

Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape
 As if I saw alike my work and self

And all that I was born to be and do,
 A twilight-piece. Love, we are in God's
 hand.

How strange now looks the life he makes
 us lead;

So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
 I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!

This chamber for example—turn your
 head—

All that's behind us! You don't under

Nor care to understand about my art,
 But you can hear at least when people
 speak :
 And that cartoon, the second from the
 door
 —It is the thing, Love! so such things
 should be—
 Behold Madonna!—I am bold to say.
 I can do with my pencil what I know,
 What I see, what at bottom of my heart
 I wish for, if I ever wish so deep—
 Do easily, too—when I say, perfectly,
 I do not boast, perhaps: yourself are
 judge,
 Who listened to the Legate's talk last
 week,
 And just as much they used to say in
 France.
 At any rate 't is easy, all of it!
 No sketches first, no studies, that 's long
 past :
 I do what many dream of all their lives,
 —Dream? strive to do, and agonize to
 do,
 And fail in doing. I could count twenty
 such
 On twice your fingers, and not leave this
 town,
 Who strive—you don't know how the
 others strive
 To paint a little thing like that you
 smeared
 Carelessly passing with your robes
 afloat,—
 Yet do much less, so much less, Some-
 one says,
 (I know his name, no matter)—so much
 less!
 Well, less is more, Lucrezia: I am
 judged.
 There burns a truer light of God in them,
 In their vexed beating stuffed and
 stopped-up brain,
 Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to
 prompt
 This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's
 hand of mine.
 Their works drop groundward, but them-
 selves, I know,
 Reach many a time a heaven that 's shut
 to me,
 Enter and take their place there sure
 enough,
 Though they come back and cannot tell
 the world.
 My works are nearer heaven, but I sit
 here.
 The sudden blood of these men! at a
 word—

Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it
 boils too.
 I, painting from myself and to myself,
 Know what I do, am unmoved by men's
 blame
 Or their praise either. Somebody re-
 marks
 Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,
 His hue mistaken; what of that? or
 else,
 Rightly traced and well ordered; what
 of that?
 Speak as they please, what does the
 mountain care?
 Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his
 grasp,
 Or what 's a heaven for? All is silver-
 gray
 Placid and perfect with my art: the
 worse!
 I know both what I want and what might
 gain,
 And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
 "Had I been two, another and myself,
 Our head would have o'erlooked the
 world!" No doubt.
 Yonder 's a work now, of that famous
 youth
 The Urbinate who died five years ago.
 ('T is copied, George Vasari sent it me.)
 Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
 Pouring his soul, with kings and popes
 to see,
 Reaching, that heaven might so replenish
 him,
 Above and through his art—for it gives
 way;
 That arm is wrongly put—and there
 again—
 A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
 Its body, so to speak: its soul is right,
 He means right—that, a child may un-
 derstand.
 Still, what an arm! and I could alter it:
 But all the play, the insight and the
 stretch—
 Out of me, out of me! And wherefore
 out?
 Had you enjoined them on me, given
 me soul,
 We might have risen to Rafael, I and
 you!
 Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I
 think—
 More than I merit, yes, by many times.
 But had you—oh, with the same perfect
 brow,
 And perfect eyes, and more than perfect
 mouth,

And the low voice my soul hears, as a
bird
The fowler's pipe, and follows to the
snare—
Had you, with these the same, but
brought a mind!
Some women do so. Had the mouth
there urged
"God and the glory! never care for gain,
The present by the future, what is that?
Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!
Rafael is waiting: up to God, all three!"
I might have done it for you. So it
seems:
Perhaps not. All is as God overrules.
Beside, 'incentives come from the soul's
self;
The rest avail not. Why do I need you?
What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?
In this world, who can do a thing, will
not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive:
Yet the will's somewhat—somewhat,
too, the power—
And thus we half-men struggle. At the
end,
God, I conclude, compensates, punishes.
'T is safer for me, if the award be strict,
That I am something underrated here,
Poor this long while, despised, to speak
the truth.
I dared not, do you know, leave home
all day,
For fear of chancing on the Paris lords.
The best is when they pass and look
aside;
But they speak sometimes; I must bear
it all.
Well may they speak! That Francis,
that first time,
And that long festal year at Fontaine-
bleau!
I surely then could sometimes leave the
ground,
Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
In that humane great monarch's golden
look,—
One finger in his beard or twisted curl
Over his mouth's good mark that made
the smile,
One arm about my shoulder, round my
neck,
The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
I painting proudly with his breath on
me,
All his court round him, seeing with his
eyes,
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire
of souls

Profuse, my hand kept plying by those
hearts,—
And, best of all, this, this, this face be-
yond,
This in the background, waiting on my
work,
To crown the issue with a last reward!
A good time, was it not, my kingly days?
And had you not grown restless . . . but
I know—
'T is done and past; 't was right, my
instinct said;
Too live the life grew, golden and not
gray,
And I'm the weak-eyed bat no sun
should tempt
Out of the grange whose four walls
make his world.
How could it end in any other way?
You called me, and I came home to your
heart.
The triumph was—to reach and stay
there; since
I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?
Let my hands frame your face in your
hair's gold,
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!
"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that;
The Roman's is the better when you pray,
But still the other's Virgin was his
wife"—
Men will excuse me. I am glad to judge
Both pictures in your presence; clearer
grows
My better fortune, I resolve to think.
For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,
Said one day Agnolo, his very self,
To Rafael . . . I have known it all these
years . . .
(When the young man was flaming out
his thoughts
Upon a palace-wall for Rome to see,
Too lifted up in heart because of it)
"Friend, there's a certain sorry little
scrub
Goes up and down our Florence, none
cares how,
Who, were he set to plan and execute
As you are, pricked on by your popes
and kings,
Would bring the sweat into that brow
of yours!"
To Rafael's!—And indeed the arm is
wrong.
I hardly dare . . . yet, only you to see,
Give the chalk here—quick, thus the
line should go!
Ay, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it
out!

Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth,
(What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?
Do you forget already words like those?)
If really there was such a chance, so
lost,—

Is, whether you're—not grateful—but
more pleased.

Well, let me think so. And you smile
indeed!

This hour has been an hour! Another
smile?

If you would sit thus by me every night
I should work better, do you compre-
hend?

I mean that I should earn more, give
you more.

See, it is settled dusk now; there's a
star;

Morello's gone, the watch-lights show
the wall,

The cue-owls speak the name we call
them by.

Come from the window, love,—come in,
at last,

Inside the melancholy little house
We built to be so gay with. God is just.
King Francis may forgive me: oft at
nights

When I look up from painting, eyes tired
out,

The walls become illumined, brick from
brick

Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright
gold,

That gold of his I did cement them with!
Let us but love each other. Must you go?

That Cousin here again? he waits out-
side?

Must see you—you, and not with me?
Those loans?

More gaming debts to pay? you smiled
for that?

Well, let smiles buy me! have you more
to spend?

While hand and eye and something of a
heart

Are left me, work's my ware, and
what's it worth?

I'll pay my fancy. Only let me sit
The gray remainder of the evening out,
Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly
How I could paint, were I but back in
France,

One picture, just one more—the Virgin's
face.

Not yours this time! I want you at my
side

To hear them—that is, Michel Agnolo—
Judge all I do and tell you of its worth.

Will you? To-morrow, satisfy your
friend.

I take the subjects for his corridor,
Finish the portrait out of hand—there,
there,

And throw him in another thing or two
If he demurs; the whole should prove
enough

To pay for this same Cousin's freak.
Beside,

What's better and what's all I care
about,

Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!
Love, does that please you? Ah, but
what does he,

The Cousin! what does he to please you
more?

I am grown peaceful as old age to-
night.

I regret little, I would change still less.
Since there my past life lies, why alter
it?

The very wrong to Francis!—it is true
I took his coin, was tempted and com-
plied,

And built this house and sinned, and all
is said.

My father and my mother died of want.
Well, had I riches of my own? you see

How one gets rich! Let each one bear
his lot.

They were born poor, lived poor, and
poor they died;

And I have labored somewhat in my
time

And not been paid profusely. Some
good son

Paint my two hundred pictures—let him
try!

No doubt, there's something strikes a
balance. Yes.

You loved me quite enough, it seems
to-night.

This must suffice me here. What would
one have?

In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one
more chance—

Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,
Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo and me
To cover—the three first without a wife,
While I have mine! So—still they
overcome

Because there's still Lucrezia,—as I
choose.

Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my
Love. 1855.

ONE WORD MORE.¹

TO E. B. B.

London, September, 1855.

I

THERE they are, my fifty men and women
 Naming me the fifty poems finished!
 Take them. Love, the book and me together:
 Where the heart lies, let the brain lie also.

II

Rafael made a century of sonnets,
 Made and wrote them in a certain volume
 Dinted with the silver-pointed pencil
 Else he only used to draw Madonnas:
 These, the world might view—but one, the volume.
 Who that one, you ask? Your heart instructs you.
 Did she live and love it all her lifetime?
 Did she drop, his lady of the sonnets,
 Die, and let it drop beside her pillow
 Where it lay in place of Rafael's glory,
 Rafael's cheek so duteous and so loving,
 Cheek, the world was wont to hail a painter's,
 Rafael's cheek, her love had turned a poet's?

III

You and I would rather read that volume,
 (Taken to his beating bosom by it)
 Lean and list the bosom-beats of Rafael,
 Would we not? than wonder at Madonnas—
 Her, San Sisto names, and Her, Foligno,
 Her, that visits Florence in a vision,
 Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre—
 Seen by us and all the world in circle.

IV

You and I will never read that volume.
 Guido Reni, like his own eye's apple
 Guarded long the treasure-book and loved it.
 Guido Reni dying, all Bologna
 Cried, and the world cried too, "Ours, the treasure!"
 Suddenly, as rare things will, it vanished.

¹ The last poem of the Collection *Men and Women*, two volumes, published in 1855, and containing a large part of Browning's greatest work. Here, for once, Browning speaks in his own person.

V

Dante once prepared to paint an angel:
 Whom to please? You whisper "Beatrice."
 While he mused and traced it and re-traced it,
 (Peradventure with a pen corroded
 Still by drops of that hot ink he dipped for,
 When, his left-hand i' the hair o' the wicked,
 Back he held the brow and pricked its stigma,
 Bit into the live man's flesh for parchment,
 Loosed him, laughed to see the writing rankle,
 Let the wretch go festering through Florence)—
 Dante, who loved well because he hated,
 Hated wickedness that hinders loving,
 Dante standing, studying his angel.—
 In there broke the folk of his Inferno.
 Says he—"Certain people of importance"
 (Such he gave his daily dreadful line to)
 "Entered and would seize, forsooth, the poet."
 Says the poet—"Then I stopped my painting."

VI

You and I would rather see that angel,
 Painted by the tenderness of Dante,
 Would we not?—than read a fresh Inferno.

VII

You and I will never see that picture.
 While he mused on love and Beatrice,
 While he softened o'er his outlined angel,
 In they broke, those "people of importance:"
 We and Bice bear the loss forever.

VIII

What of Rafael's sonnets, Dante's picture?
 This: no artist lives and loves, that longs not
 Once, and only once, and for one only,
 (Ah, the prize!) to find his love a language
 Fit and fair and simple and sufficient—
 Using nature that's an art to others,
 Not, this one time, art that's turned his nature,
 Ay, of all the artists living, loving,

None but would forego his proper
dowry,—
Does he paint? he fain would write a
poem,—
Does he write? he fain would paint a
picture,
Put to proof art alien to the artist's,
Once, and only once, and for one only,
So to be the man and leave the artist,
Gain the man's joy, miss the artist's
sorrow.

IX

Wherefore? Heaven's gift takes earth's
abatement!
He who smites the rock and spreads the
water,
Bidding drink and live a crowd beneath
him,
Even he, the minute makes immortal,
Proves, perchance, but mortal in the
minute.
Desecrates, belike, the deed in doing.
While he smites, how can he but re-
member,
So he smote before, in such a peril,
When they stood and mocked—"Shall
smiting help us?"
When they drank and sneered—"A
stroke is easy!"
When they wiped their mouths and went
their journey,
Throwing him for thanks—"But drought
was pleasant."
Thus old memories mar the actual
triumph;
Thus the doing savors of disrelish;
Thus achievement lacks a gracious some-
what;
O'er-importuned brows becloud the
mandate,
Carelessness or consciousness—the ges-
ture.
For he bears an ancient wrong about him,
Sees and knows again those phalanxed
faces,
Hears, yet one time more, the 'customed
prelude—
"How shouldst thou, of all men, smite,
and save us?"
Guesses what is like to prove the sequel—
"Egypt's flesh-pots—nay, the drought
was better."

X

Oh, the crowd must have emphatic
warrant!
Theirs, the Sinai-forehead's cloven bril-
liance,

Right-arm's rod-sweep, tongue's imperial
fiat.
Never dares the man put off the prophet.

XI

Did he love one face from out the
thousands,
(Were she Jethro's daughter, white and
wifely,
Were she but the Æthiopian bondslave,)
He would envy yon dumb patient camel,
Keeping a reserve of scanty water
Meant to save his own life in the desert;
Ready in the desert to deliver
(Kneeling down to let his breast be
opened)
Hoard and life together for his mistress.

XII

I shall never, in the years remaining,
Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you
statues,
Make you music that should all-express
me;
So it seems: I stand on my attainment
This of verse alone, one life allows me
Verse and nothing else have I to give you
Other heights in other lives, God willing
All the gifts from all the heights, you
own, Love!

XIII

Yet a semblance of resource avails us—
Shade so finely touched, love's sense must
seize it.
Take these lines, look lovingly and
nearly,
Lines I write the first time and the last
time.
He who works in fresco, steals a hair-
brush,
Curbs the liberal hand, subservient
proudly,
Cramps his spirit, crowds its all in little
Makes a strange art of an art familiar,
Fills his lady's missal-marge with
flowerets.
He who blows through bronze, may
breathe through silver,
Fitly serenade a slumbrous princess.
He who writes, may write for once as I
do.

XIV

Love, you saw me gather men and
women,
Live or dead or fashioned by my fancy,
Enter each and all, and use their service,

Speak from every mouth,—the speech, a poem.

Hardly shall I tell my joys and sorrows,
Hope and fears, belief and disbelieving :
I am mine and yours—the rest be all men's,

Karshish, Cleon, Norbert, and the fifty.
Let me speak this once in my true person,

Not as Lippo, Roland, or Andrea,
Though the fruit of speech be just this sentence :

Pray you, look on these my men and women,

Take and keep my fifty poems finished ;
Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also !

Poor the speech ; be how I speak, for all things.

XV

Not but that you know me ! Lo, the moon's self !

Here in London, yonder late in Florence,
Still we find her face, the thrice-transfigured,

Curving on a sky imbrued with color,
Drifted over Fiesole by twilight,
Came she, our new crescent of a hair's-breadth.

Full she flared it, lamping Samminiato,
Rounder 'twixt the cypresses and rounder,

Perfect till the nightingales applauded.
Now, a piece of her old self, impoverished,
Hard to greet, she traverses the house-roofs,

Hurries with unhandsome thrift of silver,
Goes dispiritedly, glad to finish.

XVI

What, there's nothing in the moon noteworthy ?

Nay : for if that moon could love a mortal,
Use, to charm him (so to fit a fancy),
All her magic ('t is the old sweet mythos),
She would turn a new side to her mortal,
Side unseen of herdsman, huntsman, steersman—

Blank to Zoroaster on his terrace,
Blind to Galileo on his turret,
Dumb to Homer, dumb to Keats—him, even !

Think, the wonder of the moonstruck mortal—

When she turns round, comes again in heaven,

Opens out anew for worse or better !

Proves she like some portent of an ice-berg

Swimming full upon the ship it founders,
Hungry with huge teeth of splintered crystals ?

Proves she as the paved work of a sapphire

Seen by Moses when he climbed the mountain ?

Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu
Climbed and saw the very God, the Highest,

Stand upon the paved work of a sapphire.
Like the bodied heaven in his clearness

Shone the stone, the sapphire of that paved work,

When they ate and drank and saw God also !

XVII

What were seen ? None knows, none ever shall know.

Only this is sure—the sight were other,
Not the moon's same side, born late in Florence,

Dying now impoverished here in London.
God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures

Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,

One to show a woman when he loves her !

XVIII

This I say of me, but think of you, Love !
This to you—yourself my moon of poets !

Ah, but that 's the world's side, there 's the wonder,

Thus they see you, praise you, think they know you !

There, in turn I stand with them and praise you—

Out of my own self, I dare to phrase it.
But the best is when I glide from out them,

Cross a step or two of dubious twilight,
Come out on the other side, the novel
Silent silver lights and darks undreamed of,

Where I hush and bless myself with silence.

XIX

Oh, their Rafael of the dear Madonnas,
Oh, their Dante of the dread Inferno,
Wrote one song—and in my brain I sing it,

Drew one angel—borne, see, on my bosom !

R. B. 1855.

BEN KARSHOOK'S WISDOM

I

"WOULD a man 'scape the rod?"

Rabbi Ben Karshook saith,

"See that he turn to God

The day before his death."

"Ay, could a man inquire

When it shall come!" I say.

The Rabbi's eye shoots fire—

"Then let him turn to-day!"

II

Quoth a young Sadducee:

"Reader of many rolls,

Is it so certain we

Have, as they tell us, souls?"

"Son, there is no reply!"

The Rabbi bit his beard:

"Certain, a soul have I—

We may have none," he sneered.

Thus Karshook, the Hiram's-Hammer,

The Right-hand Temple-column,

Taught babes in grace their grammar,

And struck the simple, solemn.

1856.

AMONG THE ROCKS

Oh, good gigantic smile o' the brown old
earth,

This autumn morning! How he sets
his bones

To bask i' the sun, and thrusts out knees
and feet

For the ripple to run over in its
mirth;

Listening the while, where on the heap
of stones

The white breast of the sea-lark twitters
sweet.

That is the doctrine, simple, ancient,
true;

Such is life's trial, as old earth smiles
and knows.

If you loved only what were worth your
love,

Love were clear gain, and wholly well
for you:

Make the low nature better by your
throes!

Give earth yourself, go up for gain
above!

1864.

w)

ABT VOGLER

(AFTER HE HAS BEEN EXTEMPO-
RIZING UPON THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT OF HIS
INVENTION)

WOULD that the structure brave, the
manifold music I build,

Bidding my organ obey, calling its
keys to their work,

Claiming each slave of the sound, at a
touch, as when Solomon willed

Armies of angels that soar, legions of
demons that lurk,

Man, brute, reptile, fly,—alien of end
and of aim,

Adverse, each from the other heaven-
high, hell-deep removed,—

Should rush into sight at once as he
named the ineffable Name,

And pile him a palace straight, to pleas-
ure the princess he loved!

Would it might tarry like his, the beau-
tiful building of mine,

This which my keys in a crowd
pressed and importuned to raise!

Ah, one and all, how they helped, would
dispart now and now combine,

Zealous to hasten the work, heighten
their master his praise!

And one would bury his brow with a
blind plunge down to hell,

Burrow awhile and build, broad on
the roots of things,

Then up again swim into sight, having
based me my palace well,

Founded it, fearless of flame, flat on
the nether springs.

And another would mount and march,
like the excellent minion he was,

Ay, another and yet another, one
crowd but with many a crest,

Raising my rampired walls of gold as
transparent as glass,

Eager to do and die, yield each his
place to the rest:

For higher still and higher (as a runner
tips with fire,

When a great illumination surprises a
festal night—

Outlined round and round Rome's dome
from space to spire)

Up, the pinnaced glory reached, and
the pride of my soul was in sight.

In sight? Not half! for it seemed, it
was certain, to match man's birth,

Nature in turn conceived, obeying an impulse as I;
 And the emulous heaven yearned down,
 made effort to reach the earth,
 As the earth had done her best, in my passion, to scale the sky:
 Novel splendors burst forth, grew familiar and dwelt with mine,
 Not a point nor peak but found and fixed its wandering star;
 Meteor-moons, balls of blaze: and they did not pale nor pine,
 For earth had attained to heaven, there was no more near nor far.

Nay more; for there wanted not who walked in the glare and glow,
 Presences plain in the place; or, fresh from the Protoplast,
 Furnished for ages to come, when a kindlier wind should blow,
 Lured now to begin and live, in a house to their liking at last;
 Or else the wonderful Dead who have passed through the body and gone,
 But were back once more to breathe in an old world worth their new:
 What never had been, was now; what was, as it shall be anon;
 And what is,—shall I say, matched both? for I was made perfect too.

All through my keys that gave their sounds to a wish of my soul,
 All through my soul that praised as its wish flowed visibly forth,
 All through music and me! For think, had I painted the whole,
 Why, there it had stood, to see, nor the process so wonder-worth:
 Had I written the same, made verse—still, effect proceeds from cause,
 Ye know why the forms are fair, ye hear how the tale is told;
 It is all triumphant art, but art in obedience to laws,
 Painter and poet are proud in the artist-list enrolled:—

But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can,
 Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo, they are!
 And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
 That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a star.
 Consider it well: each tone of our scale in itself is naught:

It is everywhere in the world—loud, soft, and all is said:
 Give it to me to use! I mix it with two in my thought:
 And there! Ye have heard and seen: consider and bow the head!

Well, it is gone at last, the palace of music I reared;
 Gone! and the good tears start, the praises that come too slow;
 For one is assured at first, one scarce can say that he feared,
 That he even gave it a thought, the gone thing was to go.
 Never to be again! But many more of the kind
 As good, nay, better, perchance: is this your comfort to me?
 To me, who must be saved because I cling with my mind
 To the same, same self, same love, same God: ay, what was, shall be.

Therefore to whom turn I but to thee, the ineffable Name?
 Builder and maker, thou, of houses not made with hands!
 What, have fear of change from thee who art ever the same?
 Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that thy power expands?
 There shall never be one lost good! What was, shall live as before;
 The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound;
 What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more;
 On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven a perfect round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist;
 Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
 Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
 When eternity affirms the conception of an hour,
 The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
 The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky.
 Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
 Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by and by.

And what is our failure here but a triumph's evidence

For the fulness of the days? Have
we withered or agonized?
Why else was the pause prolonged but
that singing might issue thence?
Why rushed the discords in, but that
harmony should be prized?
Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is
slow to clear,
Each sufferer says his say, his scheme
of the weal and woe :
But God has a few of us whom he whis-
pers in the ear ;
The rest may reason and welcome ; 't is
we musicians know.

Well, it is earth with me ; silence re-
sumes her reign :
I will be patient and proud, and soberly
acquiesce.
Give me the keys. I feel for the com-
mon chord again,
Sliding by semitones till I sink to the
minor,—yes,
And I blunt it into a ninth, and I stand
on alien ground,
Surveying awhile the heights I rolled
from into the deep ;
Which, hark, I have dared and done,
for my resting-place is found,
The C Major of this life : so, now I will
try to sleep. 1864.



RABBI BEN EZRA

GROW old along with me !
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was
made :
Our times are in his hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half ; trust God : see
all, nor be afraid !"

Not that, amassing flowers,
Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,
Which lily leave and then as best re-
call ?"
Not that, admiring stars,
It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars ;
Mine be some figured flame which
blends, transcends them all !"

Not for such hopes and fears
Annulling youth's brief years,
Do I remonstrate : folly wide the mark !
Rather I prize the doubt
Low kinds exist without,
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by
a spark.

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
Were man but formed to feed
On joy, to solely seek and find a feast :
Such feasting ended, then
As sure an end to men ;
Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets
doubt the maw-crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied
To that which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our clod ;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of his tribes that take,
I must believe.

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand
but go !
Be our joys three-parts pain !
Strive, and hold cheap the strain ;
Learn, nor account the pang ; dare,
never grudge the throe !

For thence,—a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks,—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail :
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me :
A brute I might have been, but would
not sink i' the scale.

What is he but a brute
Whose flesh has soul to suit,
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs
want play ?
To man, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its
lone way ?

Yet gifts should prove their use :
I own the Past profuse
Of power each side, perfection every
turn :
Eyes, ears took in their dole,
Brain treasured up the whole ;
Should not the heart beat once "How
good to live and learn" ?

Not once beat "Praise be thine !
I see the whole design,
I, who saw power, see now Love perfect
too :
Perfect I call thy plan :
Thanks that I was a man !
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what
thou shalt do !"

For pleasant is this flesh ;
Our soul, in its rose-mesh
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for
rest :

Would we some prize might hold
To match those manifold
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as
we did best !

Let us not always say,
“Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon
the whole !”

As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, “All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now,
than flesh helps soul !”

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
Life's struggle having so far reached its
term :

Hence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute ; a God though
in the germ.

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and
new :

Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to
indue.

Youth ended, I shall try
My gain or loss thereby ;
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is
gold :

And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame :
Young, all lay in dispute ; I shall know,
being old.

For note, when evening shuts,
A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the
gray :

A whisper from the west
Shoots—“Add this to the rest,
Take it and try its worth : here dies an-
other day.”

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at
last,

“This rage was right i' the main,

That acquiescence vain :
The Future I may face now I have proved
the Past.”

For more is not reserved
To man, with soul just nerved
To act to-morrow what he learns to-day :
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the
tool's true play.

As it was better, youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth,
Toward making, than repose on aught
found made :

So, better, age, exempt
From strife, should know, than tempt
Further. Thou waitedst age : wait death
nor be afraid !

Enough now, if the Right
And Good and Infinite
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand
thine own,
With knowledge absolute,
Subject to no dispute
From fools that crowded youth, nor let
thee feel alone.

Be there, for once and all,
Severed great minds from small,
Announced to each his station in the
Past !

Was I, the world arraigned,
Were they, my soul disdained,
Right? Let age speak the truth and
give us peace at last !

Now, who shall arbitrate ?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I re-
ceive ;
Ten, who in ears and eyes
Match me : we all surmise,
They this thing, and I that : whom shall
my soul believe ?

Not on the vulgar mass
Called “work,” must sentence pass,
Things done, that took the eye and had
the price ;
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could
value in a trice :

But all, the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,

So passed in making up the main account;
 /All instincts immature,
 All purposes unsure,
 That weighed not as his work, yet
 swelled the man's amount:

Thoughts hardly to be packed
 Into a narrow act,
 Fancies that broke through language
 and escaped;
 All I could never be,
 All, men ignored in me,
 This, I was worth to God, whose wheel
 the pitcher shaped.

Ay, note that Potter's wheel,
 That metaphor! and feel
 Why time spins fast, why passive lies
 our clay,—
 Thou, to whom fools propound,
 When the wine makes its round,
 "Since life fleets, all is change; the
 Past gone, seize to-day!"

Fool! All that is, at all,
 Lasts ever, past recall;
 Earth changes, but thy soul and God
 stand sure:
 What entered into thee,
 That was, is, and shall be:
 Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter
 and clay endure.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
 Of plastic circumstance,
 This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain
 arrest:
 Machinery just meant
 To give thy soul its bent,
 Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently
 impressed.

What though the earlier grooves,
 Which ran the laughing loves
 Around thy base, no longer pause and
 press?
 What though, about thy rim,
 Skull-things in order grim
 Grow out, in graver mood, obey the
 sterner stress?

Look not thou down but up!
 To uses of a cup,
 The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's
 peal,
 The new wine's foaming flow,
 The master's lips aglow!
 Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what
 needst thou with earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,
 Thee, God, who moudest men;
 And since, not even while the whirl was
 worst,
 Did I—to the wheel of life
 With shapes and colors rife,
 Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to
 slake thy thirst:

So, take and use thy work:
 Amend what flaws may lurk,
 What strain o' the stuff, what warpings
 past the aim!
 My times be in thy hand!
 Perfect the cup as planned!
 Let age approve of youth, and death
 complete the same! 1864.

CALIBAN UPON SETEBOS;

OR, NATURAL THEOLOGY IN THE ISLAND

"Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such
 an one as thyself."

[WILL sprawl, now that the heat of day
 is best,
 Flat on his belly in the pit's much mire,
 With elbows wide, fists clenched to prop
 his chin.
 And, while he kicks both feet in the cool
 slush,
 And feels about his spine small eft-things
 course,
 Run in and out each arm, and make
 him laugh: [plant,
 And while above his head a pompion—
 Coating the cave-top as a brow its eye,
 Creeps down to touch and tickle hair and
 beard,
 And now a flower drops with a bee inside,
 And now a fruit to snap at, catch and
 crunch,—
 He looks out o'er yon sea which sun-
 beams cross
 And recross till they weave a spider-web,
 (Meshes of fire, some great fish breaks
 at times,) [please,
 And talks to his own self, howe'er he
 Touching that other, whom his dam
 called God.
 Because to talk about Him, vexes—ha,
 Could He but know! and time to vex is
 now,
 When talk is safer than in winter-time.
 Moreover Prosper and Miranda sleep
 In confidence he drudges at their task,
 And it is good to cheat the pair, and gibe,
 Letting the rank tongue blossom into
 speech.]

Setebos, Setebos, and Setebos !

'Thinketh, He dwelleth i' the cold o' the moon.

'Thinketh He made it, with the sun to match,

But not the stars ; the stars came other-wise ;

Only made clouds, winds, meteors, such as that :

Also this isle, what lives and grows thereon,

And snaky sea which rounds and ends the same.

'Thinketh, it came of being ill at ease :
He hated that He cannot change His cold.

Nor cure its ache. 'Hath spied an icy fish

That longed to 'scape the rock-stream where she lived,

And thaw herself within the lukewarm brine

O' the lazy sea her stream thrusts far amid,

A crystal spike 'twixt two warm walls of wave ;

Only, she ever sickened, found repulse At the other kind of water, not her life,

(Green-dense and dim-delicious, bred o' the sun,)

Flounced back from bliss she was not born to breathe.

And in her old bounds buried her despair,
Hating and loving warmth alike : so He.

'Thinketh, He made thereat the sun, this isle,

Trees and the fowls here, beast and creeping thing.

Yon otter, sleek-wet, black, lithe as a leech ;

Yon auk, one fire-eye in a ball of foam,
That floats and feeds ; a certain badger brown

He hath watched hunt with that slant whitewedge eye

By moonlight ; and the pie with the long tongue

That pricks deep into oakwarts for a worm,

And says a plain word when she finds her prize, [selves

But will not eat the ants ; the ants them- That build a wall of seeds and settled stalks

About their hole—He made all these and more,

Made all we see, and us, in spite : how else ?

He could not, Himself, make a second self

To be His mate ; as well have made Himself :

He would not make what He mislikes or slights,

An eyesore to Him, or not worth His pains :

But did, in envy, listlessness or sport,
Make what Himself would fain, in a

manner, be—
Weaker in most points, stronger in a few,

Worthy, and yet mere playthings all the while,

Things He admires and mocks too,—that is it.

Because, so brave, so better though they be,

It nothing skills if He begin to plague.
Look now, I melt a gourd-fruit into mash,

Add honeycomb and pods, I have perceived,

Which bite like finches when they bill and kiss,—

Then, when froth rises bladdery, drink up all,

Quick, quick, till maggots scamper through my brain ;

Last, throw me on my back i' the seeded thyme,

And wanton, wishing I were born a bird.
Put case, unable to be what I wish,

I yet could make a live bird out of clay :
Would not I take clay, pinch my Caliban

Able to fly ?—for, there, see, he hath wings,

And great comb like the hoopoe's to admire,

And there, a sting to do his foes offence,
There, and I will that he begin to live,

Fly to yon rock-top, nip me off the horns
Of grigs high up that make the merry din

Saucy through their veined wings, and mind me not.

In which feat, if his leg snapped, brittle clay,

And he lay stupid-like,—why I should laugh ;

And if he, spying me should fall to weep
Beseech me to be good, repair his wrong,

Bid his poor leg smart less or grow again,—

Well, as the chance were this might take or else

Not take my fancy : I might hear his cry
And give the manikin three sound legs

for one,

Or pluck the other off, leave him like an
egg,
And lessoned he was mine and merely
clay.
Were this no pleasure lying in the
thyme,
Drinking the mash, with brain become
alive
Making and marring clay at will? So
He.

'Thinketh such shows nor right nor
wrong in Him,
Nor kind nor cruel: He is strong and
Lord.
'Am strong myself compared to yonder
crabs
That march now from the mountain to
the sea;
'Let twenty pass and stone the twenty-
first,
Loving not, hating not, just choosing so.
'Say, the first straggler that boasts purple
spots
Shall join the file, one pincer twisted off;
'Say this bruised fellow shall receive a
worm,
And two worms he whose nippers end
in red;
As it likes me each time I do: so He.

Well then, 'supposeth He is good i' the
main,
Placable if His mind and ways were
guessed,
But rougher than His handiwork, be
sure!
Oh, He hath made things worthier than
Himself,
And envieth that, so helped, such things
do more
Than He who made them! What con-
soles but this?
That they, unless through Him, do
naught at all,
And must submit: what other use in
things?
'Hath cut a pipe of pithless elder-joint
That, blown through, gives exact the
scream o' the jay
When from her wing you twitch the
feathers blue:
Sound this, and little birds that hate the
jay
Flock within stone's throw, glad their
foe is hurt:
Put case such pipe could prattle and
boast forsooth, [thing,
'I catch the birds, I am the crafty

I make the cry my maker cannot make
With his great round mouth; he must
blow through mine!"
Would not I smash it with my foot? So
He.

But wherefore rough, why cold and ill
at ease?
Aha, that is a question! Ask, for that,
What knows,—the something over Sete-
bos
That made Him, or He, may be, found
and fought,
Worsted, drove off and did to nothing,
perchance.
There may be something quiet o'er His
head,
Out of His reach, that feels nor joy nor
grief,
Since both derive from weakness in
some way.
I joy because the quails come; would
not joy
Could I bring quails here when I have a
mind:
This Quiet, all it hath a mind to, doth.
'Esteemeth stars the outposts of its
couch,
But never spends much thought nor care
that way.
It may look up, work up, the worse for
those
It works on! 'Careth but for Setebos
The many-handed as a cuttle-fish,
Who, making Himself feared through
what He does,
Looks up, first, and perceives he cannot
soar
To what is quiet and hath happy life;
Next looks down here, and out of very
spite
Makes this a bauble-world to ape yon
real,
These good things to match those as hips
do grapes.
'Tis solace making baubles, ay, and
sport.
Himself peeped late, eyed Prosper at his
books
Careless and lofty, lord now of the isle:
Vexed, 'stitched a book of broad leaves,
arrow-shaped,
Wrote thereon, he knows what, prodi-
gious words;
Has peeled a wand and called it by a
name;
Weareth at whiles for an enchanter's
robe
The eyed skin of a supple oncelot;

And hath an ounce sleeker than young-
ling mole,
A four-legged serpent he makes cower
and couch,
Now snarl, now hold its breath and
mind his eye,
And saith she is Miranda and my wife :
'Keeps for his Ariel a tall pouch-bill
crane
He bids go wade for fish and straight
disgorge ;
Also a sea-beast, lumpish, which he
snared,
Blinded the eyes of and brought some-
what tame,
And split its toe-webs, and now pens the
drudge
In a hole o' the rock, and calls him Cali-
ban ;
A bitter heart that bides its time and
bites.
'Plays thus at being Prosper in a way.
Taket h his mirth with make-believes: so
He.

His dam held that the Quiet made all
things
Which Setebos vexed only : 'holds not
so.
Who made them weak, meant weakness
He might vex.
Had He meant other, while His hand
was in,
Why not make horny eyes no thorn
could prick,
Or plate my scalp with bone against
the snow,
Or overscale my flesh 'neath joint and
joint
Like an orc's armor? Ay,—so spoil His
sport !
He is the One now : only He doth all.

'Saith, He may like, perchance, what
profits him.
Ay, himself loves what does him good ;
but why ?
'Gets good no otherwise. This blinded
beast
Loves whoso places flesh-meat on his
nose,
But, had he eyes, would want no help,
but hate
Or love, just as it liked him : he hath
eyes.
Also it pleases Setebos to work,
Use all His hands, and exercise much
craft, [worked.
By no means for the love of what is

'Tasteth himself, no finer good i' the
world
When all goes right, in this safe summer-
time,
And he wants little, hungers, aches not
much,
Than trying what to do with wit and
strength.
'Falls to make something : 'piled yon
pile of turfs,
And squared and stuck there squares of
soft white chalk,
And, with a fish-tooth, scratched a moon
on each,
And set up endwise certain spikes of
tree,
And crowned the whole with a sloth's
skull a-top,
Found dead i' the woods, too hard for
one to kill.
No use at all i' the work, for work's sole
sake ;
'Shall some day knock it down again: so
He.

'Saith He is terrible : watch His feats in
proof !
One hurricane will spoil six good
months' hope.
He hath a spite against me, that I know,
Just as He favors Prosper, who knows
why ?
So it is, all the same, as well I find.
'Wove wattles half the winter, fenced
them firm
With stone and stake to stop she-
tortoises
Crawling to lay their eggs here : well,
one wave,
Feeling the foot of Him upon its neck,
Gaped as a snake does, lolled out its
large tongue,
And licked the whole labor flat : so
much for spite.

'Saw a ball flame down late (yonder it
lies)
Where half an hour before, I slept i' the
shade :
Often they scatter sparkles : there is
force !
'Dug up a newt He may have envied
once
And turned to stone, shut up inside a
stone.
Please Him and hinder this?—What
Prosper does ?
Aha, if He would tell me how ! Not He !
There is the sport : discover how or die !

All need not die, for of the things o' the
isle

Some flee afar, some dive, some run up
trees;

Those at His mercy,—why they please
Him most

When . . . when . . . well, never try
the same way twice!

Repeat what act has pleased, He may
grow wroth.

You must not know His ways, and play
Him off,

Sure of the issue. Doth the like him-
self:

'Spareth a squirrel that it nothing fears
But steals the nut from underneath my
thumb,

And when I threat, bites stoutly in de-
fence:

'Spareth an urchin that contrariwise,
Curls up into a ball, pretending death
For fright at my approach: the two ways
please.

But what would move my choler more
than this,

That either creature counted on its life
To-morrow and next day and all days to
come.

Saying, forsooth, in the inmost of its
heart,

"Because he did so yesterday with me,
And otherwise with such another brute,
So must he do henceforth and always."—
Ay?

Would teach the reasoning couple what
"must" means!

'Doth as he likes, or wherefore Lord?
So He.

'Conceiveth all things will continue thus,
And we shall have to live in fear of Him
So long as He lives, keeps his strength:
no change,

If He have done His best, make no new
world

To please Him more, so leave off watch-
ing this,—

If He surprise not even the Quiet's self
Some strange day,—or, suppose, grow
into it

As grubs grow butterflies: else, here we
are, [all.

And there is He, and nowhere help at

'Believeth with the life, the pain shall
stop.

His dam held different, that after death
He both plagued enemies and feasted
friends:

Idly! He doth His worst in this our
life.

Giving just respite lest we die through
pain,

Saving last pain for worst,—with which,
an end.

Meanwhile, the best way to escape His
ire

Is, not to seem too happy. 'Sees, him-
self,

Yonder two flies, with purple films and
pink,

Bask on' the pompion-bell above: kills
both.

'Sees two black painful beetles roll their
ball

On head and tail as if to save their lives:
Moves them the stick away they strive
to clear.

Even so,' would have him misconceive,
suppose

This Caliban strives hard and ails no less,
And always, above all else, envies Him;
Wherefore he mainly dances on dark
nights,

Moans in the sun, gets under holes to
laugh,

And never speaks his mind save housed
as now:

Outside, 'groans, curses. If He caught
me here,

O'erheard this speech, and asked "What
chucklest at?"

'Would, to appease Him, cut a finger off,
Or of my three kid yearlings burn the
best,

Or let the toothsome apples rot on tree,
Or push my tame beast for the orc to
taste:

While myself lit a fire, and made a song
And sung it, "*What I hate, be consecrate,
To celebrate Thee and Thy state, no mate
For Thee; what see for envy in poor
me?*"

Hoping the while, since evils sometimes
mend,

Warts rub away and sores are cured with
slime,

That some strange day, will either the
Quiet catch

And conquer Setebos, or likelier He
Decrepit may doze, doze, as good as die.

[What, what? A curtain o'er the world
at once!

Crickets stop hissing; not a bird—or,
yes.

There scuds His raven that has told Him
 all!
 It was fool's play, this prattling! Ha!
 The wind
 Shoulders the pillared dust, death's house
 o' the move,
 And fast invading fires begin! White
 blaze—
 A tree's head snaps—and there, there,
 there, there, there,
 His thunder follows! Fool to gibe at
 Him!
 Lo! 'Lieth flat and loveth Setebos!
 'Maketh his teeth meet through his upper
 lip, [month
 Will let those quails fly, wilt not eat this
 One little mess of wheelks, so he may
 'scape!] 1864.

W

CONFESSIONS

WHAT is he buzzing in my ears?
 "Now that I come to die,
 Do I view the world as a vale of tears?"
 Ah, reverend sir, not I!

What I viewed there once, what I view
 again
 Where the physic bottles stand
 On the table's edge,—is a suburb lane,
 With a wall to my bedside hand.

That lane sloped, much as the bottles do,
 From a house you could descry
 O'er the garden-wall; is the curtain blue
 Or green to a healthy eye?

To mine, it serves for the old June
 weather
 Blue above lane and wall;
 And that farthest bottle labelled
 "Ether"
 Is the house o'ertopping all.

At a terrace, somewhere near the
 stopper,
 There watched for me, one June,
 A girl: I know, sir, it's improper,
 My poor mind 's out of tune.

Only, there was a way . . . you crept
 Close by the side, to dodge
 Eyes in the house, two eyes except:
 They styled their house "The Lodge."

What right had a lounge up their lane?
 But, by creeping very close,
 With the good wall's help,—their eyes
 might strain
 And stretch themselves to Oes,

Yet never catch her and me together,
 As she left the attic, there,
 By the rim of the bottle labelled
 "Ether,"
 And stole from stair to stair,
 And stood by the rose-wreathed gate
 Alas,
 We loved, sir—used to meet:
 How sad and bad and mad it was—
 But, then, how it was sweet! 1864

YOUTH AND ART

It once might have been, once only:
 We lodged in a street together,
 You, a sparrow on the house top lonely,
 I, a lone she-bird of his feather.

Your trade was with sticks and clay,
 You thumbed, thrust, patted and
 polished,
 Then laughed "They will see some day
 Smith made, and Gibson demolished."

My business was song, song, song;
 I chirped, cheeped, trilled and twit-
 tered,
 "Kate Brown's on the boards ere long,
 And Grisi's existence embittered!"

I earned no more by a warble
 Than you by a sketch in plaster:
 You wanted a piece of marble,
 I needed a music-master.

We studied hard in our styles,
 Chipped each at a crust like Hindoos,
 For air, looked out on the tiles,
 For fun, watched each other's win-
 dows.

You lounged, like a boy of the South,
 Cap and blouse—nay, a bit of beard
 too:
 Or you got it, rubbing your mouth
 With fingers the clay adhered to.

And I—soon managed to find
 Weak points in the flower-fence facing,
 Was forced to put up a blind
 And be safe in my corset-lacing.

No harm! It was not my fault
 If you never turned your eye's tail up
 As I shook upon E *in alt.*,
 Or ran the chromatic scale up:

For spring bade the sparrows pair,
 And the boys and girls gave guesses,

And stalls in our street looked rare
With bulrush and watercresses.

Why did not you pinch a flower
In a pellet of clay and fling it?
Why did not I put a power
Of thanks in a look, or sing it?

I did look, sharp as a lynx,
(And yet the memory rankles,)
When models arrived, some minx
Tripped up-stairs, she and her ankles.

But I think I gave you as good!
"That foreign fellow,—who can know
How she pays, in a playful mood,
For his tuning her that piano?"

Could you say so, and never say,
"Suppose we join hands and fortunes,
And I fetch her from over the way,
Her, piano, and long tunes and short
tunes?"

No, no: you would not be rash,
Nor I rasher and something over:
You've to settle yet Gibson's hash,
And Grisi yet lives in clover.

But you meet the Prince at the Board,
I'm queen myself at *bals-paré*,
I've married a rich old lord,
And you're dubbed knight and an
R. A.

Each life unfulfilled, you see;
It hangs still, patchy and scrappy:
We have not sighed deep, laughed free,
Starved, feasted, despaired,—been
happy.

And nobody calls you a dunce,
And people suppose me clever:
This could but have happened once,
And we missed it, lost it forever.

1864.

A FACE

If one could have that little head of hers
Painted upon a background of pale gold,
Such as the Tuscan's early art prefers!
No shade encroaching on the matchless
mould
Of those two lips, which should be open-
ing soft
In the pure profile: not as when she
laughs,
For that spoils all: but rather as if aloft
Yon hyacinth, she loves so, leaned its
staff's

Burden of honey-colored buds to kiss
And capture 'twixt the lips apart for
this.

Then her lithe neck, three fingers might
surround,

How it should waver on the pale gold
ground

Up to the fruit-shaped, perfect chin it
lifts!

I know, Correggio loves to mass, in rifts
Of heaven, his angel faces, orb on orb
Breaking its outline, burning shades
absorb:

But these are only massed there, I should
think,

Waiting to see some wonder momentarily
Grow out, stand full, fade slow against
the sky

(That's the pale ground you'd see this
sweet face by),

All heaven, meanwhile, condensed into
one eye

Which fears to lose the wonder, should
it wink. 1864.

PROSPICE

FEAR death?—to feel the fog in my
throat,

The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts
denote

I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the
storm,

The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a
visible form,

Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit
attained,

And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guer-
don be gained,

The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!

I would hate that death bandaged my
eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.

No! let me taste the whole of it, fare
like my peers

The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad
life's arrears

Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to
the brave,

The black minute's at end,

And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices
 that rave,
 Shall dwindle, shall blend,
 Shall change, shall become first a peace
 out of pain,
 Then a light, then thy breast,
 O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp
 thee again,
 And with God be the rest! 1861. 1864.

EPILOGUE

TO DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

WITLESS alike of will and way divine,
 How heaven's high with earth's low
 should intertwine!
 Friends, I have seen through your eyes:
 now use mine!

Take the least man of all mankind, as I;
 Look at his head and heart, find how
 and why
 He differs from his fellows utterly:

Then, like me, watch when nature by
 degrees
 Grows alive round him, as in Arctic seas
 (They said of old) the instinctive water
 flees

Toward some elected point of central
 rock,
 As though, for its sake only, roamed the
 flock
 Of waves about the waste: awhile they
 mock

With radiance caught for the occasion,
 —hues
 Of blackest hell now, now such reds and
 blues
 As only heaven could fitly interfuse,—

The mimic monarch of the whirlpool,
 king
 O' the current for a minute: then they
 wring
 Up by the roots and oversweep the thing,
 And hasten off, to play again elsewhere
 The same part, choose another peak as
 bare,
 They find and flatter, feast and finish
 there.

When you see what I tell you,—nature
 dance
 About each man of us, retire, advance,
 As though the pageant's end were to
 enhance

His worth, and—once the life, his pro-
 duct, gained—
 Roll away elsewhere, keep the strife
 sustained,
 And show thus real, a thing the North
 but feigned—

When you acknowledge that one world
 could do
 All the diverse work, old yet ever new,
 Divide us, each from other, me from
 you,—

Why, where's the need of Temple, when
 the walls
 O' the world are that? What use of
 swells and falls
 From Levites' choir, Priests' cries, and
 trumpet-calls?

That one Face, far from vanish, rather
 grows,
 Or decomposes but to recompose,
 Become my universe that feels and
 knows! 1864.

DEDICATION OF THE RING AND
THE BOOK

(END OF BOOK I)

SUCH, British Public, ye who like me not,
 (God love you!)—whom I yet have
 labored for,
 Perchance more careful whoso runs may
 read
 Than erst when all, it seemed, could
 read who ran,—
 Perchance more careless whoso reads
 may praise
 Than late when he who praised and read
 and wrote
 Was apt to find himself the selfsame
 me,—
 Such labor had such issue, so I wrought
 This arc, by furtherance of such alloy,
 And so, by one spirt, take away its trace
 Till, justifiably golden, rounds my ring.

A ring without a posy, and that ring
 mine?

O lyric Love, half angel and half bird,
 And all a wonder and a wild desire,—
 Boldest of hearts that ever braved the
 sun,
 Took sanctuary within the holier blue,
 And sang a kindred soul out to his face,—
 Yet human at the red-ripe of the heart—

When the first summons from the dark-
ling earth
Reached thee amid thy chambers,
blanched their blue,
And bared them of the glory—to drop
down,
To toil for man, to suffer or to die,—
This is the same voice: can thy soul
know change?
Hail then, and harken from the realms
of help!
Never may I commence my song, my due
To God who best taught song by gift of
thee,
Except with bent head and beseeching
hand—
That still, despite the distance and the
dark, [change
What was, again may be; some inter-
Of grace, some splendor once thy very
thought,
Some benediction anciently thy smile:
—Never conclude, but raising hand and
head
Thither where eyes, that cannot reach,
yet yearn
For all hope, all sustainment, all reward,
Their utmost up and on,—so blessing
back
In those thy realms of help, that heaven
thy home,
Some whiteness which, I judge, thy face
makes proud,
Some wanness where, I think, thy foot
may fall! 1868.

HERVÉ RIEL

I

ON the sea and at the Hogue, sixteen
hundred ninety-two,
Did the English fight the French,—woe
to France!
And, the thirty-first of May, helter-
skelter through the blue,
Like a crowd of frightened porpoises a
shoal of sharks pursue,
Came crowding ship on ship to Saint
Malo on the Rance,
With the English fleet in view.

II

'T was the squadron that escaped, with
the victor in full chase;
First and foremost of the drove, in his
great ship, Damfreville;
Close on him fled, great and small,
Twenty-two good ships in all;

And they signalled to the place
"Help the winners of a race!
Get us guidance, give us harbor, take
us quick—or, quicker still,
Here's the English can and will!"

III

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk
and leaped on board;
"Why what hope or chance have ships
like these to pass?" laughed they:
"Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all
the passage scarred and scored,
Shall the 'Formidable' here with her
twelve and eighty guns
Think to make the river-mouth by the
single narrow way,
Trust to enter where 't is ticklish for a
craft of twenty tons,
And with flow at full beside?
Now, 't is slackest ebb of tide.
Reach the mooring? Rather say,
While rock stands or water runs,
Not a ship will leave the bay!"

IV

Then was called a council straight.
Brief and bitter the debate:
"Here's the English at our heels; would
you have them take in tow
All that's left us of the fleet, linked to-
gether stern and bow,
For a prize to Plymouth Sound?
Better run the ships aground!"
(Ended Damfreville his speech).
"Not a minute more to wait!
Let the Captains all and each
Shove ashore, then blow up, burn the
vessels on the beach!
France must undergo her fate.

V

"Give the word!" But no such word
Was ever spoke or heard:
For up stood, for out stepped, for in
struck amid all these
—A Captain? A Lieutenant? A Mate—
first, second, third?
No such man of mark, and meet
With his betters to compete!
But a simple Breton sailor pressed by
Tourville for the fleet.
A poor coasting-pilot he, Hervé Riel the
Croisickese.

VI

And "What mockery or malice have we
here?" cries Hervé Riel:

"Are you mad, you Malouins? Are you
cowards, fools, or rogues?
Talk to me of rocks and shoals, me who
took the soundings, tell
On my fingers every bank, every shallow,
every swell,
'Twixt the offing here and Grève where
the river disembogues?
Are you bought by English gold? Is it
love the lying's for?
Morn and eve, night and day,
Have I piloted your bay,
Entered free and anchored fast at the
foot of Solidor.
Burn the fleet and ruin France? That
were worse than fifty Hagues!
Sirs, they know I speak the truth! Sirs,
believe me there's a way!
Only let me lead the line,
Have the biggest ship to steer,
Get this 'Formidable' clear,
Make the others follow mine,
And I lead them, most and least, by
a passage I know well,
Right to Solidor past Grève,
And there lay them safe and sound:
And if one ship misbehave,
—Keel so much as grate the ground,
Why I've nothing but my life,—here's
my head!" cries Hervé Riel.

VII

Not a minute more to wait,
"Steer us in, then, small and great!
Take the helm, lead the line, save the
squadron!" cried its chief.
Captains, give the sailor place!
He is Admiral, in brief.
Still the north-wind, by God's grace!
See the noble fellow's face
As the big ship, with a bound,
Clears the entry like a hound,
Keeps the passage as its inch of way
were the wide sea's profound!
See, safe through shoal and rock,
How they follow in a flock,
Not a ship that misbehaves, not a keel
that grates the ground,
Not a spar that comes to grief!
The peril, see, is past,
All are harbored to the last,
And just as Hervé Riel hollas
"Anchor!"—sure as fate,
Up the English come—too late!

VIII

So, the storm subsides to calm:
They see the green trees wave

On the heights o'erlooking Grève.
Hearts that bled are stanch'd with balm.
"Just our rapture to enhance,
Let the English rake the bay,
Gnash their teeth and glare askance
As they cannonade away!
'Neath rampired Solidor pleasant riding
on the Rance!"
How hope succeeds despair on each Cap-
tain's countenance!
Out burst all with one accord,
"This is Paradise for Hell!
Let France, let France's King
Thank the man that did the thing!"
What a shout, and all one word,
"Hervé Riel!"
As he stepped in front once more,
Not a symptom of surprise
In the frank blue Breton eyes,
Just the same man as before.

IX

Then said Damfreville, "My friend,
I must speak out at the end,
Though I find the speaking hard.
Praise is deeper than the lips:
You have saved the King his ships,
You must name your own reward.
'Faith, our sun was near eclipse!
Demand whate'er you will,
France remains your debtor still.
Ask to heart's content and have! or my
name's not Damfreville."

X

Then a beam of fun outbroke
On the bearded mouth that spoke,
As the honest heart laughed through
Those frank eyes of Breton blue:
"Since I needs must say my say,
Since on board the duty 's done,
And from Malo Roads to Croisic Point,
what is it but a run?—
Since 't is ask and have, I may—
Since the others go ashore—
Come! A good whole holiday!
Leave to go and see my wife, whom I
call the Belle Aurore!"
That he asked and that he got,—noth-
ing more.

XI

Name and deed alike are lost:
Not a pillar nor a post
In his Croisic keeps alive the feat as it
befell;
Not a head in white and black
On a single fishing-smack,

In memory of the man but for whom
 had gone to wrack
 All that France saved from the fight
 whence England bore the bell.
 Go to Paris : rank on rank
 Search the heroes flung pell-mell
 On the Louvre, face and flank !
 You shall look long enough ere you
 come to Hervé Riel.
 So, for better and for worse,
 Hervé Riel, accept my verse,
 In my verse, Hervé Riel, do thou once
 more
 Save the squadron, honor France, love
 thy wife, the Belle Aurore ! 1871.

FIFINE AT THE FAIR

PROLOGUE

AMPHIBIAN

THE fancy I had to-day,
 Fancy which turned a fear !
 I swam far out in the bay,
 Since waves laughed warm and clear.

I lay and looked at the sun,
 The noon-sun looked at me :
 Between us two, no one
 Live creature, that I could see.

Yes ! There came floating by -
 Me, who lay floating too,
 'Such a strange butterfly !
 Creature as dear as new :

Because the membraned wings
 So wonderful, so wide,
 So sun-suffused, were things
 Like soul and naught beside.

A handbreadth overhead !
 All of the sea my own,
 It owned the sky instead ;
 Both of us were alone.

I never shall join its flight,
 For, naught buoys flesh in air.
 If it touch the sea—good night !
 Death sure and swift waits there.

Can the insect feel the better
 For watching the uncouth play
 Of limbs that slip the fetter,
 Pretend as they were not clay ?

Undoubtedly I rejoice
 That the air comforts so well
 With a creature which had the choice
 Of the land once. Who can tell ?

What if a certain soul
 Which early slipped its sheath,
 And has for its home the whole
 Of heaven, thus look beneath,

Thus watch one who, in the world,
 Both lives and likes life's way,
 Nor wishes the wings unfurled
 That sleep in the worm, they say ?

But sometimes when the weather
 Is blue, and warm waves tempt
 To free one's self of tether,
 And try a life exempt

From worldly noise and dust,
 In the sphere which overbrims
 With passion and thought,—why, just
 Unable to fly, one swims !

By passion and thought upborne,
 One smiles to one's self—"They fare
 Scarce better, they need not scorn
 Our sea, who live in the air !"

Emancipate through passion
 And thought, with sea for sky,
 We substitute, in a fashion,
 For heaven—poetry :

Which sea, to all intent,
 Gives flesh such noon-disport
 As a finer element
 Affords the spirit-sort.

Whatever they are, we seem :
 Imagine the thing they know ;
 All deeds they do, we dream ;
 Can heaven be else but so ?

And meantime, yonder streak
 Meets the horizon's verge ;
 That is the land, to seek
 If we tire or dread the surge

Land the solid and safe—
 To welcome again (confess !)
 When, high and dry, we chafe
 The body, and don the dress.

Does she look, pity, wonder
 At one who mimics flight,
 Swims—heaven above, sea under,
 Yet always earth in sight ? 1872.

EPILOGUE

THE HOUSEHOLDER

SAVAGE I was sitting in my house, late,
 lone :

Dreary, weary with the long day's
work:
Head of me, heart of me, stupid as a
stone:

Tongue-tied now, now blaspheming
like a Turk;
When, in a moment, just a knock, call,
cry,

Half a pang and all a rapture, there
again were we!—

"What, and is it really you again?"
quoth I:

"I again, what else did you expect?"
quoth She.

"Never mind, hie away from this old
house—

Every crumbling brick embrowned
with sin and shame!

Quick, in its corners ere certain shapes
arouse!

Let them—every devil of the night—
lay claim,

Make and mend, or rap and rend, for
me! Good-by!

God be their guard from disturbance
at their glee,

Till, crash, comes down the carcass in a
heap!" quoth I:

"Nay, but there's a decency re-
quired!" quoth She.

"Ah, but if you knew how time has
dragged, days, nights!

All the neighbor-talk with man and
maid—such men!

All the fuss and trouble of street-sounds,
window-sights:

All the worry of flapping door and
echoing roof; and then,

All the fancies . . . Who were they had
leave, dared try

Darker arts that almost struck despair
in me?

If you knew but how I dwelt down
here!" quoth I:

"And was I so better off up there?"
quoth She.

"Help and get it over! *Reunited to
his wife*

(How draw up the paper lets the par-
ish people know?)

*Lies M. or N., departed from this life,
Day the this or that, month and year
the so and so.*

What if the way of final flourish? Prose,
verse? Try!

*Affliction sore long time he bore, or,
what is it to be?*

*Till God did please to grant him ease.
Do end!" quoth I:*

"I end with—Love is all, and Death
is nought!" quoth She. 1872.

HOUSE

SHALL I sonnet-sing you about myself?
Do I live in a house you would like to
see?

Is it scant of gear, has it store of pelf?
"Unlock my heart with a sonnet-
key?"

Invite the world, as my betters have
done?

"Take notice: this building remains
on view,

Its suites of reception every one,
Its private apartment and bedroom
too;

"For a ticket, apply to the Publisher."
No: thanking the public, I must de-
cline.

A peep through my window, if folk pre-
fer;

But, please you, no foot over threshold
of mine!

I have mixed with a crowd and heard
free talk

In a foreign land where an earthquake
chanced

And a house stood gaping, naught to
balk

Man's eye wherever he gazed or
glanced.

The whole of the frontage shaven sheer,
The inside gaped: exposed to day,

Right and wrong and common and
queer,

Bare, as the palm of your hand, it lay.

The owner? Oh, he had been crushed,
no doubt!

"Odd tables and chairs for a man of
wealth!

What a parcel of musty old books about!
He smoked,—no wonder he lost his
health!

"I doubt if he bathed before he dressed.
A brasier?—the pagan, he burned
perfumes!

You see it is proved, what the neighbors
guessed:

His wife and himself had separate
rooms."

Friends, the good man of the house at least

Kept house to himself till an earthquake came :

'T is the fall of its frontage permits you feast

On the inside arrangement you praise or blame.

Outside should suffice for evidence :

And whoso desires to penetrate

Deeper, must dive by the spirit-sense—

No optics like yours, at any rate !

"Hoity-toity ! A street to explore,
Your house the exception ! '*With this same key*

Shakespeare unlocked his heart !'"—

Once more,

Did Shakespeare ? If so, the less Shakespeare he ! 1876.

FEARS AND SCRUPLES

HERE's my case. Of old I used to love him,

This same unseen friend, before I knew :

Dream there was none like him, none above him,—

Wake to hope and trust my dream was true.

Loved I not his letters full of beauty ?

Not his actions famous far and wide ?

Absent, he would know I vowed him duty ;

Present, he would find me at his side.

Pleasant fancy ! for I had but letters,

Only knew of actions by hearsay :

He himself was busied with my betters ;

What of that ? My turn must come some day.

"Some day" proving—no day ! Here's the puzzle.

Passed and passed my turn is. Why complain ?

He's so busied ! If I could but muzzle
People's foolish mouths that give me pain !

"Letters ?" (hear them !) "You a judge of writing ?

Ask the experts ! How they shake the head

'Er these characters, your friend's inditing—

Call them forgery from A to Z !

"Actions ? Where's your certain proof'
(they bother)

"He, of all you find so great and good,

He, he only, claims this, that, the other
Action—claimed by men, a multitude ?"

I can simply wish I might refute you,

Wish my friend would,—by a word, a wink,—

Bid me stop that foolish mouth,—you brute you !

He keeps absent,—why, I cannot think.

Never mind ! Though foolishness may flout me,

One thing's sure enough : 't is neither frost,

No, nor fire, shall freeze or burn from out me

Thanks for truth—though falsehood, gained—though lost.

All my days, I'll go the softlier, sadlier,
For that dream's sake ! How forget the thrill

Through and through me as I thought
"The gladlier

Lives my friend because I love him still !"

Ah, but there's a menace some one utters !

"What and if your friend at home play tricks ?

Peep at hide-and-seek behind the shutters ?

Mean your eyes should pierce through solid bricks ?

"What and if he, frowning, wake you, dreamy ?

Lay on you the blame that bricks—conceal ?

Say, '*At least I saw who did not see me. Does see now, and presently shall feel ?*'

"Why, that makes your friend a monster !" say you :

"Had his house no window ? At first nod,

Would you not have hailed him ?" Hush, I pray you !

What if this friend happened to be—
God ? 1876.

NATURAL MAGIC

ALL I can say is—I saw it!
 The room was as bare as your hand.
 I locked in the swarth little lady,—I swear,
 From the head to the foot of her—well,
 quite as bare!
 “No Nauteh shall cheat me,” said I,
 “taking my stand
 At this bolt which I draw!” And this
 bolt—I withdraw it,
 And there laughs the lady, not bare, but
 embowered
 With—who knows what verdure, o’er-
 fruited, o’erflowered?
 Impossible! Only—I saw it!

ALL I can sing is—I feel it!
 This life was as blank as that room;
 I let you pass in here. Precaution, in-
 deed?
 Walls, ceiling and floor,—not a chance
 for a weed!
 Wide opens the entrance: where’s cold
 now, where’s gloom?
 No May to sow seed here, no June to
 reveal it,
 Behold you enshrined in these blooms
 of your bringing,
 These fruits of your bearing—nay, birds
 of your winging!
 A fairy-tale! Only—I feel it! 1876.

MAGICAL NATURE

FLOWER—I never fancied, jewel—I pro-
 fess you!
 Bright I see and soft I feel the outside
 of a flower.
 Save but glow inside and—jewel, I
 should guess you,
 Dim to sight and rough to touch: the
 glory is the dower.
 You, forsooth, a flower? Nay, my love,
 a jewel—
 Jewel at no mercy of a moment in
 your prime!
 Time may fray the flower-face: kind be
 time or cruel,
 Jewel, from each facet, flash your
 laugh at time! 1876.

APPEARANCES

AND so you found that poor room dull,
 Dark, hardly to your taste, my dear?
 Its features seemed unbeautiful:

But this I know—’t was there, not here,
 You plighted troth to me, the word
 Which—ask that poor room how it heard.

And this rich room obtains your praise
 Unqualified,—so bright, so fair,
 So all wherewith perfection stays?
 Ay, but remember—here, not there,
 The other word was spoken!—Ask
 This rich room how you dropped the
 mask! 1876.

EPILOGUE

TO THE PACCHIAROTTO VOLUME

μεστοί . . .
 οἱ δ’ ἀμφορῆς οἶνον μέλανος ἀνθοσμίου.

“THE poets pour us wine—”
 Said the dearest poet I ever knew,
 Dearest and greatest and best to me.
 You clamor athirst for poetry—
 We pour. “But when shall a vintage
 be”—
 You cry—“strong grape, squeezed
 gold from screw,
 Yet sweet juice, flavored flowery-fine?
 That were indeed the wine!”

One pours your cup—stark strength,
 Meat for a man; and you eye the pulp
 Strained, turbid still, from the viscous
 blood
 Of the snaky bough: and you grumble
 “Good!
 For it swells resolve, breeds hardihood;
 Dispatch it, then, in a single gulp!”
 So, down, with a wry face, goes at
 length
 The liquor: stuff for strength.

One pours your cup—sheer sweet,
 The fragrant fumes of a year con-
 densed:
 Suspicion of all that’s ripe or rathe,
 From the bud on branch to the grass in
 swathe,
 “We suck mere milk of the seasons,”
 saith
 A curl of each nostril—“dew, dis-
 pensed
 Nowise for nerving man to feat:
 Boys sip such honeyed sweet!”

And thus who wants wine strong,
 Waves each sweet smell of the year
 away;
 Who likes to swoon as the sweets suffuse

His brain with a mixture of beams and
dews

Turned syrupy drink—rough strength
eschews;

“What though in our veins your wine-
stock stay?

The lack of the bloom does our palate
wrong.

Give us wine sweet, not strong!”

Yet wine is—some affirm—

Prime wine is found in the world
somewhere,

Of portable strength with sweet to
match.

You double your heart its dose, yet
catch—

As the draught descends—a violet-
smatch,

Softness—however it came there,
Through drops expressed by the fire and
worm:

Strong sweet wine—some affirm.

Body and bouquet both?

’Tis easy to ticket a bottle so;

But what was the case in the cask, my
friends?

Cask? Nay, the vat—where the maker
mends

His strong with his sweet (you suppose)
and blends

His rough with his smooth, till none
can know

How it comes you may tipple, nothing
loth,

Body and bouquet both.

“You” being just—the world.

No poets—who turn, themselves, the
winch

Of the press; no critics—I’ll even say,
(Being flustered and easy of faith to-
day,)

Who for love of the work have learned
the way

Till themselves produce home-made,
at a pinch:

No! You are the world, and wine ne’er
purled

Except to please the world!

“For, oh the common heart!

And, ah the irremissible sin

Of poets who please themselves, not us!
Strong wine yet sweet wine pouring
thus!

How please still—Pindar and Æschy-
lus!

Drink—dipped into by the bearded
chin

Alike and the bloomy lip—no part
Denied the common heart!

“And might we get such grace,

And did you moderns but stock our
vault

With the true half-brandly half-attar-gul,
How would seniors indulge at a hearty
pull

While juniors tossed off their thimble-
ful!

Our Shakespeare and Milton escaped
your fault,

So, they reign supreme o’er the weaker
race

That wants the ancient grace!”

If I paid myself with words

(As the French say well) I were dupe
indeed!

I were found in belief that you quaffed
and bowed

At your Shakespeare the whole day
long, caroused

In your Milton pottle-deep nor drowsed
A moment of night—toped on, took
heed

Of nothing like modern cream-and-
curds.

Pay me with deeds, not words!

For—see your cellarage!

There are forty barrels with Shakes-
peare’s brand.

Some five or six are abroach: the rest
Stand spigoted, fauceted. Try and test
What yourselves call best of the very
best!

How comes it that still untouched they
stand?

Why don’t you try tap, advance a stage
With the rest in the cellarage?

For—see your cellarage!

There are four big butts of Milton’s
brew.

How comes it you make old drips and
drips

Do duty, and there devotion stops?

Leave such an abyss of malt and hops
Embellied in butts which bungs still
glue? [rage!

You hate your bard! A fig for your
Free him from cellarage!

’Tis said I brew stiff drink,

But the deuce a flavor of grape is
there.

Hardly a May-go-down, 't is just
 A sort of a gruff Go-down-it-must—
 No Merry-go-down, no gracious gust
 Commingles the racy with Spring-
 tide's rare!
 "What wonder," say you, "that we
 cough, and blink
 At Autumn's heady drink?"

Is it a fancy, friends?
 Mighty and mellow are never mixed,
 Though mighty and mellow be born at
 once.
 Sweet for the future,—strong for the
 nonce!
 Stuff you should stow away, ensconce
 In the deep and dark, to be found fast-
 fixed
 At the century's close: such time
 strength spends
 A-sweetening for my friends!

And then—why, what you quaff
 With a smack of lip and a cluck of
 tongue,
 Is leakage and leavings—just what haps
 From the tun some learned taster taps
 With a promise "Prepare your watery
 chaps!
 Here 's properest wine for old and
 young!
 Dispute its perfection? You make us
 laugh!
 Have faith, give thanks, but—
 quaff!"

Leakage, I say, or—worse—
 Leavings suffice, pot-valiant souls.
 Somebody, brimful, long ago,
 Frothed flagon he drained to the dregs;
 and, lo,
 Down whisker and beard what an over-
 flow!
 Lick spilth that has trickled from
 classic jowls,
 Sup the single scene, sip the only verse—
 Old wine, not new and worse!

I grant you: worse by much!
 Renounce that new where you never
 gained
 One glow at heart, one gleam at head,
 And stick to the warrant of age in-
 stead!
 No dwarf's-lap! Fatten, by giants fed!
 You fatten, with oceans of drink un-
 drained?
 You feed—who would choke did a cob-
 web smutch
 The Age you love so much?

A mine 's beneath a moor:
 Acres of moor roof fathoms of mine
 Which diamonds dot where you please
 to dig;
 Yet who plies spade for the bright and
 big?
 Your product is—truffles, you hunt with
 a pig!
 Since bright-and-big, when a man
 would dine,
 Suits badly: and therefore the Koh-
 i-noor
 May sleep in mine 'neath moor!

Wine, pulse in might from me!
 It may never emerge in must from
 vat,
 Never fill cask nor furnish can,
 Never end sweet, which strong began—
 God's gift to gladden the heart of man;
 But spirit 's at proof, I promise that!
 No sparing of juice spoils what should
 be
 Fit brewage—mine for me.

Man's thoughts and loves and hates!
 Earth is my vineyard, these grew
 there:
 From grape of the ground, I made or
 marred
 My vintage; easy the task or hard,
 Who set it—his praise be my reward!
 Earth's yield! Who yearn for the
 Dark Blue Sea's,
 Let them "lay, pray, bray"—the addle-
 pates!
 Mine be Man's thoughts, loves,
 hates!

But some one says, "Good Sir!"
 ("T is a worthy versed in what concerns
 The making such labor turn out well,)
 "You don't suppose that the nosegay-
 smell
 Needs always come from the grape?
 Each bell
 At your foot, each bud that your cul-
 ture spurns
 The very cowslip would act like myrrh
 On the stiffest brew—good Sir!

"Cowslips, abundant birth
 O'er meadow and hillside, vineyard
 too,
 —Like a schoolboy's scrawlings in and
 out
 Distasteful lesson-book—all about
 Greece and Rome, victory and rout—
 Love-verses instead of such vain ado!

So, fancies frolic it o'er the earth
Where thoughts have rightlier birth.

"Nay, thoughtlings they themselves;
Loves, hates—in little and less and
least!

Thoughts? *'What is a man beside a
mount!'*

Loves? *'Absent—poor lovers the min-
utes count!'*

Hates? *'Fie—Pope's letters to Martha
Blount!'*

These furnish a wine for a children's
feast:

Insipid to man, they suit the elves
Like thoughts, loves, hates, them-
selves."

And, friends, beyond dispute
I too have the cowslips dewy and dear.
Punctual as Springtide forth peep they:
I leave them to make my meadow gay.
But I ought to pluck and impound them,
eh?

Not let them alone, but deftly shear
And shred and reduce to—what may
suit
Children, beyond dispute?

And, here 's May-month, all bloom,
All bounty: what if I sacrifice?
If I out with shears and shear, nor stop
Shearing till prostrate, lo, the crop?
And will you prefer it to ginger-pop

When I've made you wine of the
memories
Which leave as bare as a churchyard
tomb

My meadow, late all bloom?

Nay, what ingratitude
Should I hesitate to amuse the wits
That have pulled so long at my flask,
nor grudged

The headache that paid their pains, nor
budged
From bungle before they sighed and
judged

"Too rough for our taste, to-day,
befits
The racy and right when the years con-
clude!"

Out on ingratitude!

Grateful or ingrate—none,
No cowslip of all my fairy crew
Shall help to concoct what makes you
wink.

And goes to your head till you think
you think!

I like them alive: the printer's ink
Would sensibly tell on the perfume
too.

I may use up my nettles, ere I've done;
But of cowslips—friends get none!

Don't nettles make a broth
Wholesome for blood grown lazy and
thick?

Maws out of sorts make mouths out of
taste.

My Thirty-four Port—no need to waste
On a tongue that's fur and a palate—
paste!

A magnum for friends who are sound!
the sick—

I'll posset and cosset them, nothing
loth,

Henceforward with nettle-broth!
1876.

LA SAISIAZ

PROLOGUE

Good, to forgive;
Best, to forget!
Living, we fret;
Dying, we live.
Fretless and free,
Soul, clasp thy pinion.
Earth have dominion,
Body, o'er thee!

Wander at will,
Day after day,
Wander away,
Wandering still—
Soul that canst soar!
Body may slumber:
Body shall cumber
Soul-flight no more.

Waft of soul's wing:
What lies above?
Sunshine and Love
Skyblue and Spring!
Body hides—where?
Ferns of all feather,
Mosses and heather,
Yours be the care! 1878.

THE TWO POETS OF CROISIC

PROLOGUE

SUCH a starved bank of moss
Till, that May-morn,
Blue ran the flash across:
Violets were born!

Sky—what a scowl of cloud
Till, near and far,
Ray on ray split the shroud :
Splendid, a star !

World—how it walled about
Life with disgrace
Till God's own smile came out :
That was thy face !

EPILOGUE

What a pretty tale you told me
Once upon a time
—Said you found it somewhere (scold
me !)

Was it prose or was it rhyme,
Greek or Latin ? Greek, you said,
While your shoulder propped my head.

Anyhow there 's no forgetting
This much if no more,
That a poet (pray, no petting !)
Yes, a bard, sir, famed of yore,
Went where suchlike used to go,
Singing for a prize, you know.

Well, he had to sing, nor merely
Sing but play the lyre ;
Playing was important clearly
Quite as singing : I desire,
Sir, you keep the fact in mind
For a purpose that's behind.

There stood he, while deep attention
Held the judges round,
—Judges able, I should mention,
To detect the slightest sound
Sung or played amiss : such ears
Had old judges, it appears !

None the less he sang out boldly,
Played in time and tune,
Till the judges, weighing coldly
Each note's worth, seemed, late or
soon,
Sure to smile " In vain one tries
Picking faults out : take the prize ! "

When, a mischief ! Were they seven
Strings the lyre possessed ?
Oh, and afterwards eleven,
Thank you ! Well, sir,—who had
guessed

Such ill luck in store ?—it happened
One of those same seven strings snapped.

All was lost, then ! No ! a cricket
(What " cicada " ? Pooh !)
—Some mad thing that left its thicket

For mere love of music—flew
With its little heart on fire,
Lighted on the crippled lyre.

So that when (Ah, joy !) our singer
For his truant string
Feels with disconcerted finger,
What does cricket else but fling
Fiery heart forth, sound the note
Wanted by the throbbing throat ?

Ay and, ever to the ending,
Cricket chirps at need,
Executes the hand's intending,
Promptly, perfectly,—indeed
Saves the singer from defeat
With her chirrup low and sweet.

Till, at ending, all the judges
Cry with one assent
" Take the prize—a prize who grudges
Such a voice and instrument ?
Why, we took your lyre for harp,
So it shrilled us forth F sharp ! "

Did the conqueror spurn the creature,
Once its service done ?
That 's no such uncommon feature
In the case when Music's son
Finds his Lotte's power too spent
For aiding soul-development.

No ! This other, on returning
Homeward, prize in hand,
Satisfied his bosom's yearning :
(Sir, I hope you understand !)
—Said " Some record there must be
Of this cricket's help to me ! "

So, he made himself a statue :
Marble stood, life-size ;
On the lyre, he pointed at you,
Perched his partner in the prize ;
Never more apart you found
Her, he throned, from him, she crowned.

That 's the tale : its application ?
Somebody I know
Hopes one day for reputation
Through his poetry that 's—Oh,
All so learned and so wise
And deserving of a prize !

If he gains one, will some ticket,
When his statue 's built,
Tell the gazer " 'Twas a cricket
Helped my crippled lyre, whose lilt
Sweet and low, when strength usurped
Softness' place i' the scale, she chirped !

"For as victory was nighest,
While I sang and played,—
With my lyre at lowest, highest,
Right alike,—one string that made
'Love' sound soft was snapt in twain
Never to be heard again,—

"Had not a kind cricket fluttered,
Perched upon the place
Vacant left, and duly uttered
'Love, Love, Love,' whence'er the bass
Asked the treble to atone
For its somewhat sombre drone."

But you don't know music! Wherefore
Keep on casting pearls
To a—poet? All I care for
Is—to tell him that a girl's
"Love" comes aptly in when gruff
Grows his singing. (There, enough!)
1878.

TRAY

SING me a hero! Quench my thirst
Of soul, ye bards!

Quoth Bard the first:
"Sir Olaf, the good knight, did don
His helm and eke his habergeon" . . .
Sir Olaf and his bard!

"That sin-scathed brow" (quoth Bard
the second),

"That eye wide ope as though Fate
beckoned

My hero to some steep, beneath
Which precipice smiled tempting
death" . . .

You too without your host have reck-
oned;

"A beggar child" (let 's hear this
third!)

"Sat on a quay's edge: like a bird
Sang to herself at careless play,
And fell into the stream. 'Dismay!
Help, you the standers-by!' None
stirred.

"Bystanders reason, think of wives
And children ere they risk their lives.
Over the balustrade has bounced
A mere instinctive dog, and pounced
Plumb on the prize. 'How well he
dives!

"Up he comes with the child, see,
tight

In mouth, alive too, clutched from quite
A depth of ten feet—twelve, I bet!

Good dog! What, off again? There's
yet

Another child to save? All right!

"How strange we saw no other fall!
It's instinct in the animal.

Good dog! But he's a long while under:
If he got drowned I should not wonder—
Strong current, that against the wall!

"Here he comes, holds in mouth this
time

—What may the thing be? Well, that's
prime!

Now, did you ever? Reason reigns
In man alone, since all Tray's pains
Have fished—the child's doll from the
slime!

"And so, amid the laughter gay,
Trotted my hero off,—old Tray,—
Till somebody, prerogated
With reason, reasoned: 'Why he dived,
His brain would show us, I should say.

"John, go and catch—or, if needs be,
Purchase that animal for me!
By vivisection, at expense
Of half-an-hour and eighteenpence,
How brain secretes dog's soul, we'll
see!" . . . 1879.

ECHETLOS

HERE is a story, shall stir you! Stand
up, Greeks dead and gone,
Who breasted, beat Barbarians, stemmed
Persia rolling on,
Did the deed and saved the world, for
the day was Marathon!

No man but did his manliest, kept rank
and fought away
In his tribe and file: up, back, out,
down—was the spear-arm play:
Like a wind-whipt branchy wood, all
spear-arms a-swing that day!

But one man kept no rank, and his sole
arm plied no spear,
As a flashing came and went, and a
form i' the van, the rear,
Brightened the battle up, for he blazed
now there, now here.

Nor helmed nor shielded, he! but, a
goat-skin all his wear,
Like a tiller of the soil, with a clown's
limbs broad and bare,
Went he ploughing on and on: he
pushed with a ploughman's share.

Did the weak mid-line give way, as tun-
nies on whom the shark
Precipitates his bulk? Did the right-
wing halt when, stark
On his heap of slain lay stretched Kalli-
machos Polemarch?

Did the steady phalanx falter? To the
rescue, at the need,
The clown was ploughing Persia, clear-
ing Greek earth of weed,
As he routed through the Sakian and
rooted up the Mede.

But the deed done, battle won,—nowhere
to be descried
On the meadow, by the stream, at the
marsh,—look far and wide
From the foot of the mountain, no, to
the last blood-plashed sea-side,—

Not anywhere on view blazed the large
limbs thonged and brown,
Shearing and clearing still with the
share before which—down
To the dust went Persia's pomp, as he
ploughed for Greece, that clown!

How spake the Oracle? "Care for no
name at all!
Say but just this: 'We praise one help-
ful whom we call
The Holder of the Ploughshare.' The
great deed ne'er grows small."

Not the great name! Sing—woe for the
great name Miltiadés
And its end at Paros isle! Woe for
Themistokles
—Satrap in Sardis court! Name not the
clown like these! 1880.

EPILOGUE TO DRAMATIC IDYLS

"TOUCH him ne'er so lightly, into song
he broke:
Soil so quick-receptive,—not one feather-
seed,
Not one flower-dust fell but straight its
fall awoke
Vitalizing virtue: song would song suc-
ceed
Sudden as spontaneous—prove a poet-
soul!"

Indeed?

Rock's the song-soil rather, surface
hard and bare:
Sun and dew their mildness, storm and
frost their rage

Vainly both expend,—few flowers
awaken there:

Quiet in its cleft broods—what the after-
age

Knows and names a pine, a nation's
heritage.¹ 1880.

WANTING IS—WHAT?

WANTING is—what?

Summer redundant,

Blueness abundant,

—Where is the blot?

Beamy the world, yet a blank all the
same,

—Framework which waits for a picture
to frame:

What of the leafage, what of the flower?

Roses embowering with naught they
embower!

Come then, complete incompleteness, O
corner,

Pant through the blueness, perfect the
summer!

Breathe but one breath

Rose-beauty above,

And all that was death

Grows life, grows love,

Grows love!

1883.

ADAM, LILITH, AND EVE

ONE day, it thundered and lightened.

Two women, fairly frightened,

Sank to their knees, transformed, trans-
fixed,

At the feet of the man who sat betwixt;

And "Mercy!" cried each—"if I tell
the truth

Of a passage in my youth!"

Said This: "Do you mind the morning
I met your love with scorning?

As the worst of the venom left my lips,

I thought, 'If, despite this lie, he strips

The mask from my soul with a kiss—I
crawl

His slave,—soul, body, and all!'"

Said that: "We stood to be married;

The priest, or some one, tarried;

¹ Having been criticised for speaking thus of his
own work (as well he might, if he chose), Brown-
ing wrote the following lines in an album, for an
American girl, at Venice:

Thus I wrote in London, musing on my betters,
Poets dead and gone; and lo, the critics cried,
"Out on such a boast!" as if I dreamed that
fetters

Binding Dante bind up—me! as if true pride
Were not also humble! . . .

'If Paradise-door prove locked?' smiled
you.

I thought, as I nodded, smiling too,
'Did one, that's away, arrive—nor late
Nor soon should unlock Hell's gate!'

It ceased to lighten and thunder.
Up started both in wonder,
Looked round and saw that the sky was
clear,

Then laughed "Confess you believed
us, Dear!"

"I saw through the joke!" the man
replied.

They re-seated themselves beside.

1883.

NEVER THE TIME AND THE PLACE

NEVER the time and the place
And the loved one all together!

This path—how soft to pace!

This May—what magic weather!

Where is the loved one's face?

In a dream that loved one's face meets
mine,

But the house is narrow, the place is
bleak

Where, outside, rain and wind combine
With a furtive ear, if I strive to speak,

With a hostile eye at my flushing
cheek,

With a malice that marks each word,
each sign!

O enemy sly and serpentine,

Uncoil thee from the waking man!

Do I hold the Past

Thus firm and fast

Yet doubt if the Future hold I can?

This path so soft to pace shall lead

Through the magic of May to herself
indeed!

Or narrow if needs the house must be,

Outside are the storms and strangers:
we—

Oh, close, safe, warm, sleep I and she,
I and she.

1883.

SONGS FROM FERISHTAH'S FANCIES

ROUND us the wild creatures, overhead
the trees,

Underfoot the moss-tracks,—life and
love with these!

I to wear a fawn-skin, thou to dress in
flowers:

All the long lone summer-day, that
greenwood life of ours!

Rich-pavilioned, rather,—still the world
without,—

Inside—gold-roofed silk-walled silence
round about!

Queen it thou on purple,—I, at watch
and ward,

Couched beneath the columns, gaze, thy
slave, love's guard!

So, for us no world? Let throngs press
thee to me!

Up and down amid men, heart by heart
fare we!

Welcome squalid vesture, harsh voice,
hateful face!

God is soul, souls I and thou: with souls
should souls have place.

Wish no word unspoken, want no look
away!

What if words were but mistake, and
looks—too sudden, say!

Be unjust for once, Love! Bear it—well
I may!

Do me justice always? Bid my heart—
their shrine—

Render back its store of gifts, old looks
and words of thine

—Oh, so all unjust—the less deserved,
the more divine?

Fire is in the flint: true, once a spark
escapes.

Fire forgets the kinship, soars till fancy
shapes

Some befitting cradle where the babe
had birth—

Wholly heaven's the product, unallied
to earth.

Splendors recognized as perfect in the
star!

In our flint their home was, housed as
now they are.

Verse-making was least of my virtues:
I viewed with despair

Wealth that never yet was but might
be—all that verse-making were

If the life would but lengthen to wish,
let the mind be laid bare.

So I said "To do little is bad, to do
nothing is worse"—

And made verse.

Love-making,—how simple a matter !
 No depths to explore,
 No heights in a life to ascend ! No dis-
 heartening Before,
 No affrighting Hereafter,—love now will
 be love evermore.
 So I felt “ To keep silence were folly .”
 —all language above,
 I made love.

Ask not one least word of praise !
 Words declare your eyes are bright ?
 What then meant that summer day's
 Silence spent in one long gaze ?
 Was my silence wrong or right ?

Words of praise were all to seek !
 Face of you and form of you,
 Did they find the praise so weak
 When my lips just touched your cheek—
 Touch which let my soul come through ?

“ Why from the world,” Ferishtah
 smiled, “ should thanks
 Go to this work of mine ? If worthy
 praise,
 Praised let it be and welcome : as verse
 ranks,
 So rate my verse : if good therein out-
 weighs
 Aught faulty judged, judge justly !
 Justice says :
 Be just to fact, or blaming or approving :
 But—generous ? No, nor loving !

“ Loving ! what claim to love has work
 of mine ?
 Concede my life were emptied of its
 gains
 To furnish forth and fill work's strict
 confine,
 Who works so for the world's sake—
 he complains
 With cause when hate, not love,
 rewards his pains.
 I looked beyond the world for truth and
 beauty :
 Sought, found, and did my duty.”
 1884.

WHY I AM A LIBERAL

“ WHY ?” Because all I haply can and do,
 All that I am now, all I hope to be,—
 Whence comes it save from fortune set-
 ting free

Body and soul the purpose to pursue,
 God traced for both ? If fetters not a
 few,

Of prejudice, convention, fall from me,
 These shall I bid men—each in his
 degree

Also God-guided—bear, and gayly, too ?

But little do or can the best of us :
 That little is achieved through Liberty.
 Who, then, dares hold, emancipated
 thus,

His fellow shall continue bound ? Not I,
 Who live, love, labor freely, nor discuss
 A brother's right to freedom. That is
 “ Why.” 1885.

ROSNY

WOE, he went galloping into the war,
 Clara, Clara !

Let us two dream : shall he 'scape with
 a scar ?

Scarcely disfigurement, rather a grace
 Making for manhood which nowise we
 mar :

See, while I kiss it, the flush on his
 face—

Rosny, Rosny !

Light does he laugh : “ With your love
 in my soul”

(Clara, Clara !)

“ How could I other than—sound, safe,
 and whole—

Cleave who opposed me asunder, yet
 stand

Scatheless beside you, as, touching
 love's goal,

Who won the race kneels, craves re-
 ward at your hand—

Rosny, Rosny ?”

Ay, but if certain who envied should
 see !

Clara, Clara,

Certain who simper : “ The hero for me
 Hardly of life were so chary as miss

Death—death and fame—that's love's
 guerdon when She

Boasts, proud bereaved one, her choice
 fell on this

Rosny, Rosny !”

So,—go on dreaming,—he lies mid a
 heap

(Clara, Clara,)

Of the slain by his hand : what is death
 but a sleep ?

Dead, with my portrait displayed on
his breast:
Love wrought his undoing: "No prudence
could keep
The love-maddened wretch from his
fate." That is best,
Rosny, Rosny! 1889.

POETICS

"So say the foolish!" Say the foolish
so, Love?
"Flower she is, my rose"—or else,
"My very swan is she"—
Or perhaps, "Yon maid-moon, blessing
earth below, Love,
That art thou!"—to them, belike: no
such vain words from me.

"Hush, rose, blush! no balm like
breath," I chide it:
"Bend thy neck its best, swan,—hers
the whiter curve!"
Be the moon the moon: my Love I place
beside it:
What is she? Her human self,—no
lower word will serve. 1889.

SUMMUM BONUM

ALL the breath and the bloom of the
year in the bag of one bee:
All the wonder and wealth of the mine
in the heart of one gem:
In the core of one pearl all the shade
and the shine of the sea:
Breath and bloom, shade and shine,—
wonder, wealth, and—how far
above them—
Truth, that's brighter than gem,
Trust, that's purer than pearl—
Brightest truth, purest trust in the
universe—all were for me
In the kiss of one girl. 1889.

A PEARL, A GIRL

A SIMPLE ring with a single stone,
To the vulgar eye no stone of price:
Whisper the right word, that alone—
Forth starts a sprite, like fire from ice,
And lo, you are lord (says an Eastern
scroll) {sole
Of heaven and earth, lord whole and
Through the power in a pearl.

A woman ('t is I this time that say)
With little the world counts worthy
praise:

Utter the true word—out and away
Escapes her soul: I am wrapt in blaze,
Creation's lord, of heaven and earth
Lord whole and sole—by a minute's
birth—
Through the love in a girl! 1889.

MUCKLE-MOUTH MEG

FROWNED the Laird on the Lord: "So,
redhanded I catch thee?
Death—doomed by our Law of the
Border!
We've a gallows outside and a chiel to
dispatch thee:
Who trespasses—hangs: all 's in
order."

He met frown with smile, did the young
English gallant:
Then the Laird's dame: "Nay, Husband,
I beg!
He's comely: be merciful! Grace for
the callant
—If he marries our Muckle-mouth
Meg!

"No mile-wide-mouthed monster of
yours do I marry:
Grant rather the gallows!" laughed he.
"Foul fare kith and kin of you—why do
you tarry?"
"To tame your fierce temper!" quoth
she.

"Shove him quick in the Hole, shut him
fast for a week:
Cold, darkness, and hunger work
wonders:
Who lion-like roars now, mouse-fashion
will squeak,
And 'it rains' soon succeed to 'it thunders.'"

A week did he bide in the cold and the
dark
—Not hunger: for duly at morning
In flitted a lass, and a voice like a lark
Chirped, "Muckle-mouth Meg still
ye're scorning?"

"Go hang, but here 's parritch to heart-
en ye first!"
"Did Meg's muckle-mouth boast
within some
Such music as yours, mine should match
it or burst:
No frog-jaws! So tell folk, my Win-
some!"

Soon week came to end, and, from Hole's
door set wide,
Out he marched, and there waited the
lassie :

"Yon gallows, or Muckle-mouth Meg
for a bride !

Consider ! Sky 's blue and turf 's
grassy :

Life 's sweet : shall I say ye wed
Muckle-mouth Meg ? "

"Not I," quoth the stout heart : "too
eerie

The mouth that can swallow a bubbly-
jock's egg ;

Shall I let it munch mine ? Never,
Dearie ! "

"Not Muckle-mouth Meg ? Wow, the
obstinate man !

Perhaps he would rather wed me ! "

"Ay, would he—with just for a dowry
your can ! "

"I'm Muckle-mouth Meg," chirruped
she.

"Then so—so—so—so—" as he kissed her
apace—

"Will I widen thee out till thou
turnest

From Margaret Minnikin-mou', by God's
grace,

To Muckle-mouth Meg in good
earnest ! " 1889.

(u) DEVELOPMENT

My Father was a scholar and knew
Greek.

When I was five years old, I asked him
once

"What do you read about ? "

"The siege of Troy."

"What is a siege, and what is Troy ? "

Whereat

He piled up chairs and tables for a town,
Set me a-top for Priam, called our cat
—Helen, enticed away from home (he
said)

By wicked Paris, who couched some-
where close

Under the footstool, being cowardly,
But whom—since she was worth the
pains, poor puss—

Towzer and Tray,—our dogs, the Atri-
dai,—sought

By taking Troy to get possession of
—Always when great Achilles ceased to
sulk,

(My pony in the stable)—forth would
prance
And put to flight Hector—our page-boy's
self.

This taught me who was who and what
was what :

So far I rightly understood the case
At five years old ; a huge delight it
proved

And still proves—thanks to that in-
structor sage

My Father, who knew better than turn
straight

Learning's full flare on weak-eyed igno-
rance,

Or, worse yet, leave weak eyes to grow
sand-blind,

Content with darkness and vacuity. .

It happened, two or three years after-
ward,

• That—I and playmates playing at Troy's
Siege—

My Father came upon our make-believe.
"How would you like to read yourself
the tale

Properly told, of which I gave you first
Merely such notion as a boy could
bear ?

Pope, now, would give you the precise
account

Of what, some day, by dint of scholar-
ship,

You 'll hear — who knows ? — from
Homer's very mouth.

Learn Greek by all means, read the 'Blind
Old Man,

Sweetest of Singers'—*tuphlos* which
means 'blind,'

Hedistos which means 'sweetest'. Time
enough !

Try, anyhow, to master him some day ;
Until when, take what serves for sub-
stitute,

Read Pope, by all means ! "

So I ran through Pope,

Enjoyed the tale—what history so true ?
Also attacked my Primer, duly drudged,
Grew fitter thus for what was promised
next—

The very thing itself, the actual words,
When I could turn—say, Buttman to
account.

Time passed, I ripened somewhat : one
fine day,

"Quite ready for the Iliad, nothing less ?
There's Heine, where the big books block
the shelf :

Don't skip a word, thumb well the
Lexicon!"

I thumbed well and skipped nowise till I
learned

Who was who, what was what, from
Homer's tongue,

And there an end of learning. Had you
asked

The all-accomplished scholar, twelve
years old,

"Who was it wrote the Iliad?"—what a
laugh!

"Why, Homer, all the world knows: of
his life

Doubtless some facts exist: it's every-
where:

We have not settled, though, his place of
birth:

He begged, for certain, and was blind
beside:

Seven cities claimed him—Scio, with
best right,

Thinks Byron. What he wrote? Those
Hymns we have.

Then there's the 'Battle of the Frogs
and Mice,'

That's all—unless they dig 'Margites' up
(I'd like that) nothing more remains to
know."

Thus did youth spend a comfortable
time;

Until—"What's this the Germans say in
fact

That Wolf found out first? It's un-
pleasant work

Their chop and change, unsettling one's
belief:

All the same, where we live, we learn,
that's sure."

So, I bent brow o'er *Prolegomena*.

And after Wolf, a dozen of his like
Proved there was never any Troy at all,

Neither Besiegers nor Besieged,—nay,
worse,—

No actual Homer, no authentic text,
No warrant for the fiction I, as fact,

Had treasured in my heart and soul so
long—

Ay, mark you! and as fact held still,
still hold,

Spite of new knowledge, in my heart of
hearts

And soul of souls, fact's essence freed and
fixed

From accidental fancy's guardian sheath.
Assuredly thenceforward—thank my

stars—

However it got there, deprive who
could—

Wring from the shrine my precious ten-
antry,

Helen, Ulysses, Hector and his Spouse,
Achilles and his Friend?—though Wolf

—ah, Wolf!

Why must he needs come doubting, spoil
a dream?

But then, "No dream's worth waking"—
Browning says:

And here's the reason why I tell thus
much.

I, now mature man, you anticipate,
May blame my Father justifiably

For letting me dream out my nonage
thus,

And only by such slow and sure degrees
Permitting me to sift the grain from

chaff,

Get truth and falsehood known and
named as such.

Why did he ever let me dream at all,
Not bid me taste the story in its strength?

Suppose my childhood was scarce quali-
fied

To rightly understand mythology,
Silence at least was in his power to keep:

I might have—somehow—correspond-
ingly—

Well, who knows by what method,
gained my gains,

Been taught, by forthrights not meand-
erings,

My aim should be to loathe, like Peleus'
son,

A lie as Hell's Gate, love my wedded
wife,

Like Hector, and so on with all the rest.
Could not I have excogitated this

Without believing such men really were?
That is—he might have put into my

hand

The "Ethics"? In translation, if you
please,

Exact, no pretty lying that improves
To suit the modern taste: no more, no

less—

The "Ethics": 't is a treatise I find hard
To read aright now that my hair is gray,

And I can manage the original.
At five years old—how ill had fared its

leaves!

Now, growing double o'er the Stagirite,
At least I soil no page with bread and

milk,

Nor crumple, dogs-ear and deface—boys'
way.

1889.

W

EPILOGUE

AT the midnight in the silence of the
sleep-time,

When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where—by death, fools
think, imprisoned—

Low he lies who once so loved you, whom
you loved so,

—Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mis-
taken!

What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish,
the unmanly?

Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I
drivel

—Being—who?

One who never turned his back but
marched breast forward.

Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were
worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight
better,

Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's
work-time

Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as
either should be,

“Strive and thrive!” cry “Speed,—
fight on, fare ever

There as here!”

1889.

CLOUGH

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III.

CLOUGH

IN A LECTURE-ROOM

AWAY, haunt thou not me,
Thou vain Philosophy !
Little hast thou bestead,
Save to perplex the head,
And leave the spirit dead.
Unto thy broken cisterns wherefore go,
While from the secret treasure-depths
below,
Fed by the skiey shower,
And clouds that sink and rest on hill-
tops high,
Wisdom at once, and Power,
Are welling, bubbling forth, unseen,
incessantly ?
Why labor at the dull mechanic oar,
When the fresh breeze is blowing,
And the strong current flowing,
Right onward to the Eternal Shore ?
1840. 1849.

BLANK MISGIVINGS

How often sit I, poring o'er
My strange distorted youth,
Seeking in vain, in all my store,
One feeling based on truth ;
Amid the maze of petty life,
A clue whereby to move,
A spot whereon in toil and strife
To dare to rest and love.
So constant as my heart would be,
So fickle as it must,
'T were well for others as for me
'T were dry as summer dust.
Excitements come, and act and speech
Flow freely forth ;—but no,
Nor they, nor aught beside can reach
The buried world below.
1841. 1849.

τὸ καλόν

I HAVE seen higher, holier things than
these,
And therefore must to these refuse
my heart,

Yet am I panting for a little ease ;
I'll take, and so depart.

Ah, hold ! the heart is prone to fall
away,
Her high and cherished visions to for-
get,
And if thou takest, how wilt thou re-
pay
So vast, so dread a debt ?

How will the heart, which now thou
trustest, then
Corrupt, yet in corruption mindful
yet,
Turn with sharp stings upon itself*
Again,
Bethink thee of the debt !

—Hast thou seen higher, holier things
than these,
And therefore must to these thy heart
refuse ?
With the true best, alack, how ill
agrees
That best that thou would'st choose !

The Summum Pulchrum rests in heaven
above ;
Do thou, as best thou may'st, thy duty
do :
Amid the things allowed thee live and
love ;
Some day thou shalt it view.
1841. 1849.

QUA CURSUM VENTUS

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried ;

When fell the night, upspring the
breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side ;

E'en so, but why the tale reveal
Of those, whom year by year un-
changed,
Brief absence joined anew to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered—
Ah, neither blame, for neither willed,
Or wist, what first with dawn ap-
peared!

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness
too,
Through winds and tides one compass
guides—
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze; and O great seas,
Though ne'er, that earliest parting
past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold where'er they fare,—
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas!
At last, at last, unite them there!

1849.

THE NEW SINAI

Lo, here is God, and there is God!
Believe it not, O Man;
In such vain sort to this and that
The ancient heathen ran:
Though old Religion shake her head,
And say in bitter grief,
The day behold, at first foretold,
Of atheist unbelief:
Take better part, with manly heart,
Thine adult spirit can;
Receive it not, believe it not,
Believe it not, O Man!

As men at dead of night awaked
With cries, "The king is here,"
Rush forth and greet whome'er they
meet,

Whoe'er shall first appear;
And still repeat, to all the street,
"Tis he,—the king is here;"
The long procession moveth on,
Each nobler form they see,
With changeful suit they still salute
And cry, "'Tis he, 'tis he!"

So, even so, when men were young,
And earth and heaven were new,

And His immediate presence He
From human hearts withdrew,
The soul perplexed and daily vexed
With sensuous False and True,
Amazed, bereaved, no less believed,
And fain would see Him too:
"He is!" the prophet-tongues ^{pro-}
claimed;
In joy and hasty fear,
"He is!" aloud replied the crowd,
"Is here, and here, and here."

"He is! They are!" in distance seen
On yon Olympus high,
In those Avernian woods abide
And walk this azure sky:
"They are! They are!"—to every
show

Its eyes the baby turned,
And blazes sacrificial, tall,
On thousand altars burned:
"They are! They are!"—On Sinai's top
Far seen the lightnings shone,
The thunder broke, a trumpet spoke,
And God said, "I am One."

God spake it out, "I, God, am One;"
The unheeding ages ran.
And baby-thoughts again, again,
Have dogged the growing man:
And as of old from Sinai's top
God said that God is One,
By Science strict so speaks He now
To tell us, There is None!
Earth goes by chemic forces; Heaven's
A Mécanique Céleste!
And heart and mind of human kind
A watch-work as the rest!

Is this a Voice, as was the Voice,
Whose speaking told abroad,
When thunder pealed, and mountain
reeled,

The ancient truth of God?
Ah, not the Voice; 'tis but the cloud,
The outer-darkness dense,
Where image none, nor e'er was seen
Similitude of sense.
'Tis but the cloudy darkness dense
That wrapt the Mount around;
While in amaze the people stays,
To hear the Coming Sound.

Is there no prophet-soul the while
To dare, sublimely meek,
Within the shroud of blackest cloud
The Deity to seek?
'Midst atheistic systems dark,
And darker hearts' despair,
That soul has heard perchance His word,

And on the dusky air
His skirts, as passed He by, to see
Hath strained on their behalf,
Who on the plain, with dance amain,
Adore the Golden Calf.

'Tis but the cloudy darkness dense ;
Though blank the tale it tells,
No God, no Truth ! yet He, in sooth,
Is there—within it dwells ;
Within the sceptic darkness deep
He dwells that none may see,
Till idol forms and idle thoughts
Have passed and ceased to be :
No God, no Truth ! ah though, in sooth
So stand the doctrine's half :
On Egypt's track return not back,
Nor own the Golden Calf.

Take better part, with manlier heart,
Thine adult spirit can ;
No God, no Truth, receive it ne'er—
Believe it ne'er—O Man !
But turn not then to seek again
What first the ill began ;
No God, it saith ; ah, wait in faith
God's self-completing plan ;
Receive it not, but leave it not,
And wait it out, O man !

"The Man that went the cloud within
Is gone and vanished quite ;
He cometh not," the people cries,
"Nor bringeth God to sight :
Lo these thy gods, that safety give,
Adore and keep the feast !"
Deluding and deluded cries
The Prophet's brother-Priest :
And Israel all bows down to fall
Before the gilded beast.

Devout, indeed ! that priestly creed,
O Man, reject as sin ;
The clouded hill attend thou still,
And him that went within.
He yet shall bring some worthy thing
For waiting souls to see :
Some sacred word that he hath heard
Their light and life shall be ;
Some lofty part, than which the heart
Adopt no nobler can,
Thou shalt receive, thou shalt believe
And thou shalt do, O Man !

1845. 1869.

THE QUESTIONING SPIRIT

THE human spirits saw I on a day,
Sitting and looking each a different way ;
And hardly tasking, subtly questioning,

Another spirit went around the ring
To each and each : and as he ceased his
say,
Each after each, I heard them singly
sing,
Some querulously high, some softly,
sadly low,

We know not—what avails to know ?
We know not—wherefore need we know ?
This answer gave they still unto his suing,
We know not, let us do as we are doing.
Dost thou not know that these things
only seem ?—

I know not, let me dream my dream.
Are dust and ashes fit to make a
treasure ?—

I know not, let me take my pleasure.
What shall avail the knowledge thou hast
sought ?—

I know not, let me think my thought.
What is the end of strife ?—

I know not, let me live my life.
How many days or e'er thou mean'st to
move ?—

I know not, let me love my love.
Were not things old once new ?—

I know not, let me do as others do.

And when the rest were over past,
I know not, I will do my duty, said the
last.

Thy duty do ? rejoined the voice,
Ah, do it, do it, and rejoice ;
But shalt thou then, when all is done,
Enjoy a love, embrace a beauty
Like these, that may be seen and won
In life, whose course will then be run ;
Or wilt thou be where there is none ?
I know not, I will do my duty.

And taking up the word around, above,
below,

Some querulously high, some softly,
sadly low,
We know not, sang they all, nor ever
need we know.

We know not, sang they, what avails to
know ?

Whereat the questioning spirit, some
short space,
Though unabashed, stood quiet in his
place.

But as the echoing chorus died away
And to their dreams the rest returned
apace,

By the one spirit I saw him kneeling
low,

And in a silvery whisper heard him say :

Truly, thou know'st not, and thou
 need'st not know ;
 Hope only, hope thou, and believe al-
 way ;
 I also know not, and I need not know,
 Only with questionings pass I to and
 fro,
 Perplexing these that sleep, and in their
 folly
 Imbreeding doubt and sceptic melan-
 choly ;
 Till that, their dreams deserting, they
 with me
 Come all to this true ignorance and
 thee. 1847. 1862.

BETHESDA

A SEQUEL

I SAW again the spirits on a day,
 Where on the earth in mournful case
 they lay ;
 Five porches were there, and a pool, and
 round,
 Huddling in blankets, strewn upon the
 ground,
 Tied-up and bandaged, weary, sore and
 spent,
 The maimed and halt, diseased and im-
 potent.

For a great angel came, 't was said, and
 stirred
 The pool at certain seasons, and the
 word
 Was, with this people of the sick, that
 they
 Who in the waters here their limbs
 should lay
 Before the motion on the surface ceased
 Should of their torment straightway be
 released.
 So with shrunk bodies and with heads
 down-dropped,
 Stretched on the steps, and at the pil-
 lars propped,
 Watching by day and listening through
 the night,
 They filled the place, a miserable sight.

And I beheld that on the stony floor
 He too, that spoke of duty once before,
 No otherwise than others here to-day,
 Foredone and sick and sadly muttering
 lay.

"I know not, I will do—what is it I
 would say :
 What was that word which once suf-
 ficed alone for all,

Which now I seek in vain, and never
 can recall ?"
 And then, as weary of in vain renew-
 ing
 His question, thus his mournful thought
 pursuing,
 "I know not, I must do as other men
 are doing."

But what the waters of that pool might
 be,
 Of Lethe were they, or Philosophy ;
 And whether he, long waiting, did at-
 tain
 Deliverance from the burden of his pain
 There with the rest ; or whether, yet
 before,
 Some more diviner stranger passed the
 door
 With his small company into that sad
 place,
 And breathing hope into the sick man's
 face, [go,
 Bade him take up his bed, and rise and
 What the end were, and whether it
 were so,
 Further than this I saw not, neither
 know. 1849. 1862.

FROM AMOURS DE VOYAGE

EN ROUTE

*Over the great windy waters, and over
 the clear-crested summits,
 Unto the sun and the sky, and unto the
 perfecter earth,
 Come, let us go,—to a land wherein gods
 of the old time wandered,
 Where every breath even now changes
 to ether divine.
 Come let us go ; though withal a voice
 whisper, "The world that we live in,
 Whithersoever we turn, still is the same
 narrow crib ;
 'Tis but to prove limitation, and measure
 a cord, that we travel ;*

¹ Clough's long poem in hexameters, *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, interesting as it is, is of too little importance and poetic value in proportion to its length, to be included in these selections ; and no parts of it are detachable as extracts. Some examples of Clough's use of hexameters (and elegiacs) may however be taken from his other long poem, the *Amours de Voyage*, which suffer comparatively little in being separated from their context, and are equally characteristic of some of Clough's moods. They are also interesting as a contrast to Byron's verses on Rome, in *Childe Harold* and elsewhere. On the *Amours de Voyage*, see especially Bagehot's Essay on Clough.

*Let who would 'scape and be free go to
his chamber and think ;
'Tis but to change idle fancies for
memories wilfully falser ;
'Tis but to go and have been."*—Come,
little bark ! let us go.

ROME

ROME disappoints me still ; but I shrink
and adapt myself to it.
Somehow a tyrannous sense of a super-
incumbent oppression
Still, wherever I go, accompanies ever,
and makes me
Feel like a tree (shall I say ?) buried
under a ruin of brickwork
Rome, believe me, my friend, is like its
own Monte Testaceo,
Merely a marvelous mass of broken and
castaway wine-pots.
Ye gods ! what do I want with this rub-
bish of ages departed,
things that Nature abhors, the experi-
ments that she has failed in ?
What do I find in the Forum ? An arch-
way and two or three pillars.
Well, but St. Peter's ? Alas, Bernini
has filled it with sculpture !
No one can cavil, I grant, at the size of
the great Coliseum.
Doubtless the notion of grand and capa-
cious and massive amusement,
this the old Romans had ; but tell me,
is this an idea ?
Yet of solidity much, but of splendor
little is extant :
"Brickwork I found thee, and marble I
left thee !" their Emperor vaunted ;
"Marble I thought thee, and brickwork
I find thee !" the Tourist may answer.

THE PANTHEON

No, great Dome of Agrippa, thou art not
Christian ! canst not,
Strip and replaster and daub and do
what they will with thee, be so !
Here underneath the great porch of
colossal Corinthian columns,
Here as I walk, do I dream of the Chris-
tian belfries above them ?
Or, on a bench as I sit and abide for long
hours, till thy whole vast
Round grows dim as in dreams to my
eyes, I repeople thy niches,
Not with the Martyrs, and Saints, and
Confessors, and Virgins, and children,
But with the mightier forms of an older,
austerer worship ;

And I recite to myself, how
Eager for battle here
Stood Vulcan, here maternal Juno,
And with the bow to his shoulder
faithful
He, who with pure dew laveth of Castaly
His flowing locks, who holdeth of Lycia
The oak forest and the wood that bore
him,
Delos' and Patara's own Apollo.

ON MONTORIO'S HEIGHT

TIBUR is beautiful, too, and the orchard
slopes, and the Anio
Falling, falling yet, to the ancient lyri-
cal cadence ;
Tibur and Anio's tide ; and cool from
Lucretius ever,
With the Digentian stream, and with
the Bandusian fountain,
Folded in Sabine recesses, the valley and
villa of Horace :—
So not seeing I sang ; so seeing and lis-
tening say I,
Here as I sit by the stream, as I gaze at
the cell of the Sibyl,
Here with Albunea's home and the grove
of Tiburnus beside me ;
Tivoli beautiful is, and musical, O Tevere-
rone,
Dashing from mountain to plain, thy
parted impetuous waters,
Tivoli's waters and rocks ; and fair unto
Monte Gennaro
(Haunt, even yet, I must think, as I
wander and gaze, of the shadows,
Faded and pale, yet immortal, of Faunus,
the Nymphs, and the Graces),
Fair in itself, and yet fairer with human
completing creations,
Folded in Sabine recesses the valley and
villa of Horace :—
So not seeing I sang ; so now—Nor see-
ing, nor hearing,
Neither by waterfall lulled, nor folded
in sylvan embraces,
Neither by cell of the Sibyl, nor stepping
the Monte Gennaro,
Seated on Anio's bank, nor sipping
Bandusian waters,
But on Montorio's height, looking down
on the tile-clad streets, the
Cupolas, crosses, and domes, the bushes
and kitchen-gardens,
Which, by the grace of the Tibur, pro-
claim themselves Rome of the
Romans.—
But on Montorio's height, looking forth
to the vapory mountains,

Cheating the prisoner Hope with illusions of vision and fancy,—
But on Montorio's height, with these
weary soldiers by me,
Waiting till Oudinot enter, to reinstate
Pope and Tourist.

THE REAL QUESTION

Action will furnish belief,—but will that
belief be the true one?
This is the point, you know. However,
it doesn't much matter.
What one wants, I suppose, is to prede-
termine the action,
So as to make it entail, not a chance be-
lief, but the true one.
Out of the question, you say; *if a thing*
isn't wrong we may do it.
Ah! but this *wrong*, you see—but I do
not know that it matters. . . .

SCEPTIC MOODS

ROME is fallen, I hear, the gallant Medi-
ci taken,
Noble Manara slain, and Garibaldi has
lost *il Moro*;—
Rome is fallen; and fallen, or falling,
heroical Venice.
I, meanwhile, for the loss of a single
small chit of a girl, sit
Moping and mourning here,—for her,
and myself much smaller.
Whither depart the souls of the brave
that die in the battle,
Die in the lost, lost fight, for the cause
that perishes with them?
Are they upborne from the field on the
slumberous pinions of angels
Unto a far-off home, where the weary
rest from their labor,
And the deep wounds are healed, and
the bitter and burning moisture
Wiped from the generous eyes? or do
they linger, unhappy,
Pining, and haunting the grave of their
by-gone hope and endeavor?
All declamation, alas! though I talk,
I care not for Rome nor
Italy; feebly and faintly, and but with
the lips, can lament the
Wreck of the Lombard youth, and the
victory of the oppressor.
Whither depart the brave!—God knows;
I certainly do not.

ENVOI

*So go forth to the world, to the good re-
port and the evil!*

*Go, little book! thy tale, is it not evil
and good?*
*Go, and if strangers revile, pass quietly
by without answer.*
*Go, and if curious friends ask of thy
rearing and age.*
*Say, "I am flitting about many years
from brain unto brain of
Feeble and restless youths born to in-
glorious days:*
*But," so finish the word, "I was writ in a
Roman chamber,
When from Janiculan heights thun-
dered the cannon of France."*
1848-1849. 1858.

PESCHIERA

WHAT voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost?
"Tis better to have fought and lost.
Than never to have fought at all."

The tricolor—a trampled rag—
Lies, dirt and dust; the lines I track
By sentry boxes yellow-black,
Lead up to no Italian flag.

I see the Croat soldier stand
Upon the grass of your redoubts;
The eagle with his black wings flouts
The breadth and beauty of your land.

Yet not in vain, although in vain,
O men of Brescia, on the day
Of loss past hope, I heard you say
Your welcome to the noble pain.

You say, "Since so it is,—good-bye
Sweet life, high hope; but whatsoe'er
May be, or must, no tongue shall dare
To tell, 'The Lombard feared to die!'"

You said (there shall be answer fit),
"And if our children must obey,
They must: but thinking on this day
'Twill less debase them to submit."

You said (Oh not in vain you said),
"Haste, brothers, haste, while yet we
may;
The hours ebb fast of this one day
When blood may yet be nobly shed."

Ah! not for idle hatred, not
For honor, fame, nor self-applause,
But for the glory of the cause,
You did, what will not be forgot.

And though the stranger stand, 'tis true,
By force and fortune's right he stands;

By fortune, which is in God's hands,
And strength, which yet shall spring in
you.

This voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost,
" 'Tis better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all."
1849. 1862.

ALTERAM PARTEM

OR shall I say, Vain word, false thought,
Since Prudence hath her martyrs too,
And Wisdom dictates not to do.
Till doing shall be not for nought?

Not ours to give or lose is life;
Will Nature, when her brave ones fall,
Remake her work? or songs recall
Death's victim slain in useless strife?

That rivers flow into the sea
Is loss and waste, the foolish say,
Nor know that back they find their way,
Unseen, to where they wont to be.

Showers fall upon the hills, springs flow,
The river runneth still at hand.
Brave men are born into the land,
And whence the foolish do not know.

No! no vain voice did on me fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost,
" 'T is better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all."
1849. 1862.

IN THE DEPTHS

It is not sweet content, be sure,
That moves the nobler Muse to song,
Yet when could truth come whole and
pure

From hearts that inly writhe with
wrong?

"T is not the calm and peaceful breast
That sees or reads the problem true;
They only know, on whom 't has prest
Too hard to hope to solve it too.

Our ills are worse than at their ease
These blameless happy souls suspect,
They only study the disease,
Alas, who live not to detect. 1862.

THE LATEST DECALOGUE

THOU shalt have one God only; who
Would be at the expense of two?

No graven images may be
Worshipped, except the currency:
Swear not at all; for, for thy curse
Thine enemy is none the worse:
At church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:
Honor thy parents: that is, all
From whom advancement may befall;
Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not
strive

Officially to keep alive:
Do not adultery commit;
Advantage rarely comes of it:
Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,
When it's so lucrative to cheat:
Bear not false witness; let the lie
Have time on its own wings to fly:
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
Approves all forms of competition.
1862.

FROM DIPSYCHUS

"THERE is no God," the wicked saith,
"And truly it's a blessing,
For what He might have done with us
It's better only guessing."

"There is no God," a youngster thinks,
"Or really, if there may be,
He surely did not mean a man
Always to be a baby."

"There is no God, or if there is,"
The tradesman thinks, "'t were funny
If He should take it ill in me
To make a little money."

"Whether there be," the rich man says.
"It matters very little,
For I and mine, thank somebody,
Are not in want of victual."

Some others, also, to themselves,
Who scarce so much as doubt it,
Think there is none, when they are well
And do not think about it.

But country folks who live beneath
The shadow of the steeple;
The parson and the parson's wife,
And mostly married people;

Youths green and happy in first love,
So thankful for illusion;
And men caught out in what the world
Calls guilt, in first confusion;

And almost every one when age,
Disease, or sorrows strike him,

Inclines to think there is a God,
Or something very like Him.
1849. 1862.

Our gaities, our luxuries,
Our pleasures and our glee,
Mere insolence and wantonness,
Alas! they feel to me.

How shall I laugh and sing and dance?
My very heart recoils,
While here to give my mirth a chance
A hungry brother toils.

The joy that does not spring from joy
Which I in others see,
How can I venture to employ,
Or find it joy for me? 1849. 1869.

This world is very odd we see,
We do not comprehend it;
But in one fact we all agree,
God won't, and we can't mend it.

Being common sense, it can't be sin
To take it as I find it;
The pleasure to take pleasure in;
The pain, try not to mind it.

These juicy meats, this flashing wine,
May be an unreal mere appearance;
Only—for my inside, in fine,
They have a singular coherence.

Oh yes, my pensive youth, abstain;
And any empty sick sensation,
Remember, anything like pain
Is only your imagination.

Trust me, I've read your German sage
To far more purpose e'er than you did;
You find it in his wisest page,
Whom God deludes is well deluded.
1849. 1869.

Where are the great, whom thou
would'st wish to praise thee?
Where are the pure, whom thou would'st
choose to love thee?
Where are the brave, to stand supreme
above thee,
Whose high commands would cheer,
whose chiding raise thee?
Seek, seeker, in thyself; submit to
find

In the stones, bread, and life in the
blank mind. 1849. 1862.

When the enemy is near thee,
Call on us!
In our hands we will upbear thee.
He shall neither scathe nor scare thee,
He shall fly thee, and shall fear thee.
Call on us!
Call when all good friends have left thee,
Of all good sights and sounds bereft thee;
Call when hope and heart are sinking,
And the brain is sick with thinking,
Help, O help!
Call, and following close behind thee
There shall haste, and there shall find
thee,
Help, sure help.

When the panic comes upon thee,
When necessity seems on thee,
Hope and choice have all forgone thee,
Fate and force are closing o'er thee,
And but one way stands before thee—
Call on us!
Oh, and if thou dost not call,
Be but faithful, that is all.
Go right on, and close behind thee
There shall follow still and find thee,
Help, sure help.
1849. 1862.

SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT A VAILLETH

SAY not the struggle nought availleth,
The labor and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly break-
ing,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets
making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the
light, [slowly,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how
But westward, look, the land is bright.
1849. 1862.

EASTER DAY

NAPLES, 1849

THROUGH the great sinful streets of
 Naples as I passed,
 With fiercer heat than flamed above
 my head
 My heart was hot within me; till at
 last

My brain was lightened when my
 tongue had said—

Christ is not risen!

Christ is not risen, no—

He lies and moulders low;

Christ is not risen!

What though the stone were rolled
 away, and though

The grave found empty there?—

If not there, then elsewhere;

If not where Joseph laid Him first, why
 then

Where other men

Translaid Him after, in some humbler
 clay.

Long ere to-day

Corruption that sad perfect work hath
 done,

Which here she scarcely, lightly had
 begun:

The foul engendered worm
 Feeds on the flesh of the life-giving
 form

Of our most Holy and Anointed One.

He is not risen, no—

He lies and moulders low;

Christ is not risen!

What if the women, ere the dawn was
 gray,

Saw one or more great angels, as they
 say

(Angels, or Him himself)? Yet neither
 there, nor then,

Nor afterwards, nor elsewhere, nor at
 all,

Hath He appeared to Peter or the Ten;

Nor save in thunderous terror, to blind
 Saul;

Save in an after Gospel and late Creed,
 He is not risen, indeed,—

Christ is not risen!

Or, what if e'en, as runs a tale, the Ten
 Saw, heard, and touched, again and yet
 again?

What if at Emmaüs' inn, and by Caper-
 naum's Lake,

Came One, the bread that brake—

Came One that spake as never mortal
 spake,

And with them ate, and drank, and
 stood, and walked about?

Ah? "some" did well to "doubt!"

Ah! the true Christ, while these things
 came to pass,

Nor heard, nor spake, nor walked, nor
 lived, alas!

He was not risen, no—

He lay and mouldered low,

Christ was not risen!

As circulates in some great city crowd
 A rumor changeful, vague, impor-
 tunate, and loud,

From no determined centre or of fact

Or authorship exact,

Which no man can deny

Nor verify;

So spread the wondrous fame;

He all the same

Lay senseless, mouldering, low:

He was not risen, no—

Christ was not risen!

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;

As of the unjust, also of the just—

Yea, of that Just One, too!

This is the one sad Gospel that is true—
 Christ is not risen!

Is He not risen, and shall we not rise?

Oh, we unwise!

What did we dream, what wake we to
 discover?

Ye hills, fall on us, and ye mountains,
 cover!

In darkness and great gloom

Come ere we thought it is *our* day of
 doom;

From the cursed world, which is one
 tomb,

Christ is not risen!

Eat, drink, and play, and think that this
 is bliss:

There is no heaven but this;

There is no hell,

Save earth, which serves the purpose
 doubly well,

Seeing it visits still

With equallest apportionment of ill

Both good and bad alike, and brings to
 one same dust

The unjust and the just

With Christ, who is not risen.

Eat, drink, and die, for we are souls be-
 reaved:

Of all the creatures under heaven's
wide cope
We are most hopeless, who had once
most hope, [lieved.
And most beliefless, that had most be-
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;
As of the unjust, also of the just—
Yea, of that Just One too !
It is the one sad Gospel that is true—
Christ is not risen !

Weep not beside the tomb,
Ye women, unto whom [Him ;
He was great solace while ye tended
Ye who with napkin o'er the head
And folds of linen round each wounded
limb
Laid out the Sacred Dead ;
And thou that bar'st Him in thy won-
dering womb ;
Yea, Daughters of Jerusalem, depart,
Bind up as best ye may your own sad
bleeding heart :

Go to your homes, your living children
tend,
Your earthly spouses love ;
Set your affection *not* on things
above,
Which moth and rust corrupt, which
quickest come to end :
Or pray, if pray ye must, and pray, if
pray ye can,
For death ; since dead is He whom ye
deemed more than man,
Who is not risen : no—
But lies and moulders low—
Who is not risen !

Ye men of Galilee !
Why stand ye looking up to heaven,
where Him ye ne'er may see,
Neither ascending hence, nor returning
hither again ?

Ye ignorant and idle fishermen !
Hence to your huts, and boats, and in-
land native shore,
And catch not men, but fish ;
Whate'er things ye might wish,
Him neither here nor there ye e'er shall
meet with more.

Ye poor deluded youths, go home,
Mend the old nets ye left to roam,
Tie the split oar, patch the torn sail :
It was indeed an "idle tale"—

He was not risen !
And, oh, good men of ages yet to be,
Who shall believe *because* ye did not
see—

Oh, be ye warned, be wise !
Nor more with pleading eyes,
And sobs of strong desire,
Unto the empty vacant void aspire,
Seeking another and impossible birth
That is not of your own, and only mother
earth.

But if there is no other life for you,
Sit down and be content, since this must
even do ;

He is not risen !
One look, and then depart,
Ye humble and ye holy men of
heart ;
And ye ! ye ministers and stewards of a
Word

Which ye would preach, because another
heard—

Ye worshippers of that ye do not
know,
Take these things hence and go :—
He is not risen !

Here, on our Easter Day
We rise, we come, and lo ! we find Him
not,

Gardener nor other, on the sacred spot :
Where they have laid Him there is none
to say ;

No sound, nor in, nor out—no word
Of where to seek the dead or meet the
living Lord.

There is no glistening of an angel's
wings,

There is no voice of heavenly clear be-
hest :

Let us go hence, and think upon these
things

In silence, which is best.
Is He not risen ? No—
But lies and moulders low ?
Christ is not risen ?

EASTER DAY

II

So in the sinful streets, abstracted and
alone,

I with my secret self held communing
of mine own.

So in the southern city spake the
tongue

Of one that somewhat overwildly sung,
But in a later hour I sat and heard

Another voice that spake—another
graver word.

Weep not, it bade, whatever hath been
said,

Though He be dead, He is not dead.

In the true creed
He is yet risen indeed ;
Christ is yet risen.

Weep not beside His Tomb,
Ye women unto whom
He was great comfort and yet greater
grief ;

Nor ye, ye faithful few that wont with
Him to roam,

Seek sadly what for Him ye left, go
hopeless to your home ;

Nor ye despair, ye sharers yet to be of
their belief ;

Though He be dead, He is not dead,

Nor gone, though fled,

Not lost, though vanished ;

Though He return not, though

He lies and moulders low ;

In the true creed

He is yet risen indeed ;

Christ is yet risen.

Sit if ye will, sit down upon the ground,
Yet not to weep and wail, but calmly
look around.

Whate'er befell,

Earth is not hell ;

Now, too, as when it first began,

Life is yet life, and man is man.

For all that breathe beneath the heaven's
high cope,

Joy with grief mixes, with despondence
hope.

Hope conquers cowardice, joy grief ;

Or at least, faith unbelief.

Though dead, not dead ;

Not gone, though fled ;

Not lost, though vanished.

In the great gospel and true creed,

He is yet risen indeed ;

Christ is yet risen. 1849. 1869.

HOPE EVERMORE AND BELIEVE !

HOPE evermore and believe, O man, for
e'en as thy thought

So are the things that thou see'st ;
e'en as thy hope and belief.

Cowardly art thou and timid ? they rise
to provoke thee against them ;

Hast thou courage ? enough, see them
exulting to yield.

Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the
wild sea's fuming waters

(Violent say'st thou and hard, mighty
thou think'st to destroy),

All with ineffable longing are waiting
their Invader,

All, with one varying voice, call to
him, Come and subdue ;

Still for their Conqueror call, and, but
for the joy of being conquered
(Rapture they will not forego), dare
to resist and rebel ;

Still, when resisting and raging, in soft
undervoice say unto him,

Fear not, retire not, O man ; hope
evermore and believe.

Go from the east to the west, as the sun
and the stars direct thee,

Go with the girdle of man, go and
encompass the earth.

Not for the gain of the gold ; for the
getting, the hoarding, the having,

But for the joy of the deed ; but for
the Duty to do.

Go with the spiritual life, the higher
volition and action,

With the great girdle of God, go and
encompass the earth.

Go ; say not in thy heart, And what
then were it accomplished,

Were the wild impulse allayed, what
were the use or the good !

Go, when the instinct is stilled, and
when the deed is accomplished,

What thou hast done and shalt do,
shall be declared to thee then.

Go with the sun and the stars, and yet
evermore in thy spirit

Say to thyself : It is good : yet is there
better than it.

This that I see is not all, and this that I
do is but little ;

Nevertheless it is good, though there
is better than it. 1862.

QUI LABORAT, ORAT

O ONLY Source of all our light and life,
Whom as our truth, our strength, we

see and feel,

But whom the hours of mortal moral
strife

Alone aright reveal !

Mine inmost soul, before Thee inly
brought,

Thy presence owns ineffable, divine ;
Chastised each rebel self-encentered
thought,

My will adareth Thine.

With eye down-dropped, if then this
earthly mind

Speechless remain, or speechless e'en
depart ;
Nor seek to see—for what of earthly
kind
Can see Thee as Thou art?—

If well-assured 'tis but profanely bold
In thought's abstractest forms to seem
to see,
It dare not dare the dread communion
hold
In ways unworthy Thee,

O not unowned, thou shalt unnamed
forgive,
In worldly walks the prayerless heart
prepare ;
And if in work its life it seem to live,
Shalt make that work be prayer.

Nor times shall lack, when while the
work it plies,
Unsummoned powers the blinding film
shall part,
And scarce by happy tears made dim,
the eyes
In recognition start.

But, as thou wilt, give or e'en forbear
The beatific supersensual sight,
So, with Thy blessing blessed, that
humbler prayer
Approach Thee morn and night.
1862.

ἕμους ἄμυνος

O THOU whose image in the shrine
Of human spirits dwells divine ;
Which from that precinct once con-
veyed,

To be to outer day displayed,
Doth vanish, part, and leave behind
Mere blank and void of empty mind,
Which wilful fancy seeks in vain
With casual shapes to fill again !

O Thou that in our bosom's shrine
Dost dwell, unknown because divine !
I thought to speak, I thought to say,
"The light is here," "behold the way,"
"The voice was thus," and "thus the
word."

And "thus I saw," and "that I heard,"—
But from the lips that half essayed
The imperfect utterance fell unmade.

O Thou, in that mysterious shrine
Enthroned, as I must say, divine !
I will not frame one thought of what
Thou mayest either be or not.

I will not prate of "thus" and "so,"
And be profane with "yes" and "no,"
Enough that in our soul and heart
Thou, whatso'er Thou may'st be, art.

Unseen, secure in that high shrine
Acknowledged present and divine,
I will not ask some upper air,
Some future day to place Thee there ;
Nor say, nor yet deny, such men
And women saw Thee thus and then :
Thy name was such, and there or here
To him or her Thou didst appear.

Do only Thou in that dim shrine,
Unknown or known, remain, divine ;
There, or if not, at least in eyes
That scan the fact that round them lies,
The hand to sway, the judgment guide,
In sight and sense Thyself divide :
Be Thou but there,—in soul and heart,
I will not ask to feel Thou art. 1862.

"THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY"

WHAT we, when face to face we see
The Father of our souls, shall be,
John tells us, doth not yet appear ;
Ah ! did he tell what we are here !

A mind for thoughts to pass into,
A heart for loves to travel through,
Five senses to detect things near,
Is this the whole that we are here ?

Rules baffle instincts—instincts rules,
Wise men are bad—and good are fools,
Facts evil—wishes vain appear,
We cannot go, why are we here ?

O may we for assurance' sake,
Some arbitrary judgment take,
And wilfully pronounce it clear,
For this or that 'tis we are here ?

Or is it right, and will it do,
To pace the sad confusion through,
And say :—It doth not yet appear,
What we shall be, what we are here ?

Ah yet, when all is thought and said,
The heart still overrules the head ;
Still what we hope we must believe,
And what is given us receive ;

Must still believe, for still we hope
That in a world of larger scope,
What here is faithfully begun
Will be completed, not undone.

My child, we still must think, when we
That ampler life together see,
Some true result will yet appear
Of what we are, together, here. 1862.

AH! YET CONSIDER IT AGAIN!

"OLD things need not be therefore true,"
O brother men, nor yet the new;
Ah! still awhile the old thought retain,
And yet consider it again!

The souls of now two thousand years
Have laid up here their toils and fears,
And all the earnings of their pain,—
Ah, yet consider it again!

We! what do we see? each a space
Of some few yards before his face;
Does that the whole wide plan explain?
Ah, yet consider it again!

Alas! the great world goes its way,
And takes its truth from each new day;
They do not quit, nor can retain,
Far less consider it again. 1851. 1862.

SONGS IN ABSENCE

COME home, come home! and where is
home for me, [sea?
Whose ship is driving o'er the trackless
To the frail bark here plunging on its
way,
To the wild waters, shall I turn and say
To the plunging bark, or to the salt sea
foam,
You are my home?

Fields once I walked in, faces once I
knew,
Familiar things so old my heart believed
them true,
These far, far back, behind me lie, be-
fore
The dark clouds mutter, and the deep
seas roar,
And speak to them that 'neath and o'er
them roam
No words of home.

Beyond the clouds, beyond the waves
that roar,
There may indeed, or may not be a shore,
Where fields as green, and hands and
hearts as true,
The old forgotten semblance may renew,
And offer exiles driven far o'er the salt
sea foam
Another home.

But toil and pain must wear out many a
day,
And days bear weeks, and weeks bear
months away,
Ere, if at all, the weary traveller hear,
With accents whispered in his wayworn
ear,
A voice he dares to listen to, say, Come
To thy true home.

Come home, come home! and where a
home hath he [sea?
Whose ship is driving o'er the driving
Through clouds that mutter, and o'er
waves that roar, [shore
Say, shall we find, or shall we not, a
That is, as is not ship or ocean foam,
Indeed our home? 1852. 1862.

GREEN fields of England! wheresoe'er
Across this watery waste we fare,
Your image at our hearts we bear,
Green fields of England, everywhere.

Sweet eyes in England, I must flee
Past where the waves' last confines be,
Ere your loved smile I cease to see,
Sweet eyes in England, dear to me.

Dear home in England, safe and fast
If but in thee my lot lie cast,
The past shall seem a nothing past
To thee, dear home, if won at last;
Dear home in England, won at last.
1852. 1862.

COME back, come back! behold with
straining mast
And swelling sail, behold her steaming
fast;
With one new sun to see her voyage o'er,
With morning light to touch her native
shore.

Come back! come back.

Come back, come back! while westward
laboring by,
With sailless yards, a bare black hulk
we fly.
See how the gale we fight with sweeps
her back,
To our lost home, on our forsaken track.
Come back, come back.

Come back, come back! across the fly-
ing foam,
We hear faint far-off voices call us home:

Come back, ye seem to say ; ye seek in
vain ;
We went, we sought, and homeward
turned again.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back ; and whither
back or why ?
To fan quenched hopes, forsaken schemes
to try ;

Walk the old fields ; pace the familiar
street ;

Dream with the idlers, with the bards
compete.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back ; and whither
and for what ?

To finger idly some old Gordian knot,
Unskilled to sunder, and too weak to
cleave,

And with much toil attain to half-
believe.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back ; yea back, in-
deed, do go

Sighs panting thick, and tears that want
to flow ;

Fond fluttering hopes upraise their use-
less wings,

And wishes idly struggle in the strings ;
Come back, come back.

Come back, come back, more eager than
the breeze,

The flying fancies sweep across the seas,
And lighter far than ocean's flying foam,
The heart's fond message hurries to its
home.

Come back, come back.

Come back, come back !

Back flies the foam ; the hoisted flag
streams back ;

The long smoke wavers on the home-
ward track,

Back fly with winds things which the
winds obey,

The strong ship follows its appointed
way. 1852. 1862.

SOME future day when what is now is
not, [got,

When all old faults and follies are for-
And thoughts of difference passed like
dreams away,

We'll meet again, upon some future
day.

When all that hindered, all that vexed
our love,

As tall rank weeds will climb the blade
above,

When all but it has yielded to decay,
We'll meet again upon some future day.

When we have proved, each on his
course alone,

The wider world, and learned what's
now unknown,

Have made life clear, and worked out
each a way,

We'll meet again,—we shall have much
to say.

With happier mood, and feelings born
anew,

Our boyhood's bygone fancies we'll re-
view, [play,

Talk o'er old talks, play as we used to
And meet again, on many a future day.

Some day, which oft our hearts shall
yearn to see, [be,

In some far year, though distant yet to
Shall we indeed,—ye winds and waters,
say !—

Meet yet again, upon some future day ?
1852. 1862.

WHERE lies the land to which the ship
would go ?

Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from ?

Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth
face,

Linked arm in arm, how pleasant here
to pace ;

Or, o'er the stern reclining, watch below
The foaming wake far widening as we go.

On stormy nights when wild north-
westers rave,

How proud a thing to fight with wind
and wave !

The dripping sailor on the reeling mast
Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship
would go ?

Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from ?

Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say
1852. 1862.

WERE you with me, or I with you,
There's nought, methinks, I might not
do;
Could venture here, and venture there,
And never fear, nor ever care.

To things before, and things behind,
Could turn my thoughts, and turn my
mind,
On this and that, day after day,
Could dare to throw myself away.

Secure, when all was o'er, to find
My proper thought, my perfect mind,
And unimpaired receive anew
My own and better self in you.
1853. 1862.

O SHIP, ship, ship,
That travellest over the sea,
What are the tidings, I pray thee,
Thou bearest hither to me?

Are they tidings of comfort and joy,
That shall make me seem to see
The sweet lips softly moving
And whispering love to me?

Or are they of trouble and grief,
Estrangement, sorrow, and doubt,
To turn into torture my hopes,
And drive me from Paradise out?

O ship, ship, ship,
That comest over the sea,
Whatever it be thou bringest,
Come quickly with it to me.
1853. 1869.

THE STREAM OF LIFE

O STREAM descending to the sea,
Thy mossy banks between,
The flow'rets blow, the grasses grow,
The leafy trees are green.

In garden plots the children play,
The fields the laborers till,
And houses stand on either hand,
And thou descendest still.

O life descending into death,
Our waking eyes behold,
Parent and friend thy lapse attend,
Companions young and old.

Strong purposes our mind possess,
Our hearts affections fill,
We toil and earn, we seek and learn,
And thou descendest still.

O end to which our currents tend,
Inevitable sea,
To which we flow, what do we know,
What shall we guess of thee?

A roar we hear upon thy shore,
As we our course fulfil;
Scarce we divine a sun will shine
And be above us still. 1862.

"WITH WHOM IS NO VARIABLE NESS, NEITHER SHADOW OF TURNING"

It fortifies my soul to know
That, though I perish, Truth is so:
That, howsoever I stray and range,
Whate'er I do, Thou dost not change.
I steadier step when I recall
That, if I slip, Thou dost not fall. 1862.

ITE DOMUM SATURÆ, VENIT HESPERUS

THE skies have sunk, and hid the upper
snow
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie),
The rainy clouds are filing fast below,
And wet will be the path, and wet shall
we.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie.

Ah dear, and where is he, a year ago,
Who stepped beside and cheered us on
and on?
My sweetheart wanders far away from
me,
In foreign land or on a foreign sea.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie.

The lightning zigzags shoot across the
sky
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie),
And through the vale the rains go
sweeping by;
Ah me, and when in shelter shall we be?
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie.

Cold, dreary cold, the stormy winds feel
they
O'er foreign lands and foreign seas that
stray
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie).

And doth he e'er, I wonder, bring to
mind

The pleasant huts and herds he left be-
hind ?

And doth he sometimes in his slumbering
see

The feeding kine, and doth he think of
me,

My sweetheart wandering whereso'er it
be ?

Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie.

The thunder bellows far from snow to
snow

(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie),

And loud and louder roars the flood be-
low.

Heigho ! but soon in shelter shall we be :
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie),

Or shall he find before his term be sped,
Some comelier maid that he shall wish
to wed ?

(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie.)

For weary is work, and weary day by day
To have your comfort miles on miles
away.

Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie.

Or may it be that I shall find my mate,
And he returning see himself too late ?

For work we must, and what we see, we
see.

And God he knows, and what must be,
must be

When sweethearts wander far away
from me.

Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie.

The sky behind is brightening up anew
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and
La Palie),

The rain is ending, and our journey too :
Heigho ! aha ! for here at home are we :—
In, Rose, and in, Provence and La Palie.

1862.

CURRENTE CALAMO

QUICK, painter, quick, the moment seize
Amid the snowy Pyrenees ;
More evanescent than the snow,
The pictures come, are seen, and go :
Quick, quick, *currente calamo*.

I do not ask the tints that fill
The gate of day 'twixt hill and hill ;
I ask not for the hues that fleet
Above the distant peaks ; my feet
Are on a poplar-bordered road,
Where with a saddle and a load
A donkey, old and ashen-gray,
Reluctant works his dusty way.
Before him, still with might and main,
Pulling his rope, the rustic rein,
A girl : before both him and me,
Frequent she turns and lets me see,
Unconscious, lets me scan and trace
The sunny darkness of her face
And outlines full of southern grace.

Following I notice, yet and yet,
Her olive skin, dark eyes deep set,
And black, and blacker e'en than jet,
The escaping hair that scantily showed,
Since o'er it in the country mode,
For winter warmth and summer shade,
The lap of scarlet cloth is laid.
And then, back-falling from the head,
A crimson kerchief overspread
Her jacket blue : thence passing down,
A skirt of darkest yellow-brown,
Coarse stuff, allowing to the view
The smooth limb to the woollen shoe.

But who—here's some one following
too,—

A priest, and reading at his book !
Read on, O priest, and do not look ;
Consider,—she is but a child,—
Yet might your fancy be beguiled.
Read on, O priest, and pass and go !
But see, succeeding in a row,
Two, three, and four, a motley train,
Musicians wandering back to Spain ;
With fiddle and with tambourine,
A man with women following seen.
What dresses, ribbon ends, and flowers !
And,—sight to wonder at for hours,—
The man,—to Phillip has he sat ?—
With butterfly-like velvet hat ;
One dame his big bassoon conveys,
On one his gentle arm he lays ;
They stop, and look, and something say,
And to " España " ask the way.

But while I speak, and point them
on,

Alas ! my dearer friends are gone ;
The dark-eyed maiden and the ass
Have had the time the bridge to pass.
Vainly, beyond it far descried,
Adieu, and peace with you abide,
Gray donkey, and your beauteous guide.
The pictures come, the pictures go,
Quick, quick, *currente calamo*.

From *Mari Magno*, 1862.

COME, POET, COME!

COME, Poet, come!

A thousand laborers ply their task,
And what it tends to scarcely ask,
And trembling thinkers on the brink
Shiver, and know not how to think.
To tell the purport of their pain,
And what our silly joys contain;
In lasting lineaments portray
The substance of the shadowy day;
Our real and inner deeds rehearse,
And make our meaning clear in verse:
Come, Poet, come! for but in vain
We do the work or feel the pain,
And gather up the seeming gain,
Unless before the end thou come
To take, ere they are lost, their sum.

Come, Poet, come!

To give an utterance to the dumb,
And make vain babblers silent, come;
A thousand dupes point here and there,
Bewildered by the show and glare;
And wise men half have learned to
doubt

Whether we are not best without.
Come, Poet; both but wait to see
Their error proved to them in thee.

Come, Poet, come!

In vain I seem to call. And yet
Think not the living times forget.
Ages of heroes fought and fell
That Homer in the end might tell;
O'er grovelling generations past
Upstood the Doric fane at last;
And countless hearts on countless years
Had wasted thoughts, and hopes, and
fears,

Rude laughter and unmeaning tears,
Ere England Shakespeare saw, or Rome
The pure perfection of her dome.
Others, I doubt not, if not we,
The issue of our toils shall see;
Young children gather as their own
'The harvest that the dead had sown,
'The dead forgotten and unknown.

1862.

THE HIDDEN LOVE

O LET me love my love unto myself alone,
And know my knowledge to the world
unknown;

No witness to my vision call,
Beholding, unbeheld of all;
And worship Thee, with Thee with-
drawn apart,

Whoe'er, Whate'er Thou art,
Within the closest veil of mine own in-
most heart.

What is it then to me
If others are inquisitive to see?
Why should I quit my place to go and
ask

If other men are working at their task?
Leave my own buried roots to go
And see that brother plants shall grow;
And turn away from Thee, O Thou most
Holy Light

To look if other orbs their orbits keep
aright,
Around their proper sun,
Deserting Thee, and being undone.

O let me love my love unto myself alone,
And know my knowledge to the world
unknown;

And worship Thee, O hid One, O much
sought,
As but man can or ought,
Within the abstracted'st shrine of my
least breathed on thought.

Better it were, thou sayest, to consent;
Feast while we may, and live ere life be
spent;

Close up clear eyes, and call the un-
stable sure,
The unlovely lovely, and the filthy pure;
In self-belyings, self-deceivings roll,
And lose in Action, Passion, Talk, the
soul.

Nay, better far to mark off thus much
air,

And call it Heaven: place bliss and
glory there; [sky,
Fix perfect homes in the unsubstantial
And say, what is not, will be by-and-bye.
1869.

PERCHE PENSA? PENSANDO S' IN-
VECCHIA

To spend uncounted years of pain,
Again, again, and yet again,
In working out in heart and brain
The problem of our being here;
To gather facts from far and near,
Upon the mind to hold them clear,
And, knowing more may yet appear,
Unto one's latest breath to fear,
The premature result to draw—
Is this the object, end and law.

And purpose of our being here?

1869.

LIFE IS STRUGGLE

To wear out heart, and nerves, and
brain,
And give oneself a world of pain ;
Be eager, angry, fierce, and hot,
Imperious, supple—God knows what,
For what's all one to have or not ;
O false, unwise, absurd, and vain !
For 'tis not joy, it is not gain,
It is not in itself a bliss,
Only it is precisely this
That keeps us all alive.

To say we truly feel the pain,
And quite are sinking with the strain ;—
Entirely, simply, undeceived,
Believe, and say we ne'er believed
The object, e'en were it achieved,
A thing we e'er had cared to keep ;
With heart and soul to hold it cheap,
And then to go and try it again ;
O false, unwise, absurd, and vain !
O, 'tis not joy, and 'tis not bliss,
Only it is precisely this
That keeps us still alive. 1869.

SONNETS ON THE THOUGHT OF
DEATH

If it is thou whose casual hand with-
draws
What it at first as casually did make,
Say what amount of ages it will take
With tardy rare concurrences of laws,
And subtle multiplicities of cause,
The thing they once had made us to re-
make ; [awake,
May hopes dead slumbering dare to re-
E'en after utmost interval of pause,
What revolutions must have passed, be-
fore
The great celestial cycles shall restore
The starry sign whose present hour is
gone ;
What worse than dubious chances inter-
pose, [pose
With cloud and sunny gleam to recom-
The skiey picture we had gazed upon.

BUT if as not by that the soul desired
Swayed in the judgment, wisest men
have thought
And furnishing the evidence it sought,
Man's heart hath ever fervently required,
And story, for that reason deemed in-
spired,

To every clime, in every age, hath
taught ;
If in this human complex there be aught
Not lost in death, as not in birth acquired,
O then, though cold the lips that did
convey
Rich freights of meaning, dead each liv-
ing sphere
Where thought abode, and fancy loved
to play,
Thou yet, we think, somewhere somehow
still art,
And satisfied with that the patient heart
The where and how doth not desire to
hear. 1869.

IN A LONDON SQUARE

PUT forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane,
East wind and frost are safely gone ;
With zephyr mild and balmy rain
The summer comes serenely on ;
Earth, air, and sun and skies combine
To promise all that's kind and fair :—
But thou, O human heart of mine,
Be still, contain thyself, and bear.

December days were brief and chill,
The winds of March were wild and
drear,
And, nearing and receding still,
Spring never would, we thought, be
here.
The leaves that burst, the suns that shine,
Had, not the less, their certain date :—
And thou, O human heart of mine,
Be still, refrain thyself, and wait.
1869.

ALL IS WELL

WHATE'ER you dream, with doubt
possessed,
Keep, keep it snug within your breast,
And lay you down and take your rest ;
Forget in sleep the doubt and pain,
And when you wake, to work again.
The wind it blows, the vessel goes,
And where and whither, no one knows.

'Twill all be well : no need of care ;
Though how it will, and when, and
where,
We cannot see, and can't declare.
In spite of dreams, in spite of thought,
'Tis not in vain, and not for nought,
The wind it blows, the ship it goes,
Though where and whither, no one
knows. 1869.

ARNOLD

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ARNOLD

QUIET WORK

ONE lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee,
One lesson which in every wind is
 blown,
One lesson of two duties kept at one
Though the loud world proclaim their
 enmity—
Of toil unsever'd from tranquillity !
Of labor, that in lasting fruit outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplish'd in
 repose,
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry !
Yes, while on earth a thousand discords
 ring,
Man's fitful uproar mingling with his
 toil,
Still do thy sleepless ministers move on,
Their glorious tasks in silence perfect-
 ing ;
Still working, blaming still our vain
 turmoil,
Laborers that shall not fail, when man
 is gone. 1849.

TO A FRIEND

WHO prop, thou ask'st, in these bad
days, my mind ?—
He much, the old man, who, clearest-
soul'd of men,
Saw The Wide Prospect, and the Asian
Fen,
And Tmolus hill, and Smyrna bay,
though blind.
Much he, whose friendship I not long
since won,
That halting slave, who in Nicopolis
Taught Arrian, when Vespasian's brutal
son
Clear'd Rome of what most shamed him.
But be his
My special thanks, whose even-balanced
soul,
From first youth tested up to extreme
old age,

Business could not make dull, nor pas-
sion wild ;
Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole ;
The mellow glory of the Attic stage,
Singer of sweet Colonus, and its child.
1849.

SHAKESPEARE

OTHERS abide our question. Thou art
free.
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art
still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the lofti-
est hill,
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
Planting his steadfast footsteps in the
sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwell-
ing-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foil'd searching of mortality ;
And thou, who didst the stars and sun-
beams know,
Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honor'd,
self-secure,
Didst tread on earth unguess'd at.—
Better so !
All pains the immortal spirit must
endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs
which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious
brow. 1849.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

COME, dear children, let us away ;
Down and away below !
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shoreward blow,
Now the salt tides seaward flow ;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray
Children dear, let us away !
This way, this way !

Call her once before you go—
 Call once yet!
 In a voice that she will know:
 "Margaret! Margaret!"
 Children's voices should be dear
 (Call once more) to a mother's ear;
 Children's voices, wild with pain—
 Surely she will come again!
 Call her once and come away;
 This way, this way!
 "Mother dear, we cannot stay!
 The wild white horses foam and fret."
 Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;
 Call no more!
 One last look at the white-wall'd town,
 And the little gray church on the windy
 shore,
 Then come down!
 She will not come though you call all
 day;
 Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday
 We heard the sweet bells over the
 bay?
 In the caverns where we lay,
 Through the surf and through the swell,
 The far-off sound of a silver bell?
 Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
 Where the winds are all asleep;
 Where the spent lights quiver and
 gleam,
 Where the salt weed sways in the
 stream,
 Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
 Feed in the ooze of their pasture-
 ground;
 Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
 Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
 Where great whales come sailing by,
 Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
 Round the world for ever and aye?
 When did music come this way?
 Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
 (Call yet once) that she went away?
 Once she sate with you and me,
 On a red gold throne in the heart of the
 sea,
 And the youngest sate on her knee.
 She comb'd its bright hair, and she
 tended it well,
 When down swung the sound of a far-off
 bell.
 She sigh'd, she look'd up through the
 clear green sea;

She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk
 pray
 In the little gray church on the shore to-
 day.
 'T will be Easter-time in the world—ah
 me!
 And I lose my poor soul, Merman! here
 with thee."
 I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the
 waves;
 Say thy prayer, and come back to the
 kind sea-caves!"
 She smiled, she went up through the
 surf in the bay.
 Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
 "The sea grows stormy, the little ones
 moan;
 Long prayers," I said, "in the world
 they say;
 Come!" I said: and we rose through the
 surf in the bay.
 We went up the beach, by the sandy
 down
 Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the
 white-wall'd town;
 Through the narrow paved streets, where
 all was still,
 To the little gray church on the windy
 hill.
 From the church came a murmur of
 folk at their prayers,
 But we stood without in the cold blow-
 ing airs.
 We climb'd on the graves, on the stones
 worn with rains,
 And we gazed up the aisle through the
 small leaded panes.
 She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
 "Margaret, hist! come quick, we are
 here!
 Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
 The sea grows stormy, the little ones
 moan."
 But, ah, she gave me never a look,
 For her eyes were seal'd to the holy
 book!
 Loud prays the priest; shut stands the
 door.
 Come away, children, call no more!
 Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!
 Down to the depths of the sea!
 She sits at her wheel in the humming
 town,
 Singing most joyfully.
 Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,

For the humming street, and the child
 with its toy ! [well ;
 For the priest and the bell, and the holy
 For the wheel where I spun,
 And the blessed light of the sun ! ”
 And so she sings her fill,
 Singing most joyfully,
 Till the spindle drops from her hand,
 And the whizzing wheel stands still.
 She steals to the window, and looks at
 the sand,
 And over the sand at the sea ;
 And her eyes are set in a stare ;
 And anon there breaks a sigh,
 And anon there drops a tear,
 From a sorrow-clouded eye,
 And a heart sorrow-laden,
 A long, long sigh ;
 For the cold strange eyes of a little Mer-
 maiden
 And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away children ;
 Come children, come down !
 The hoarse wind blows coldly ;
 Lights shine in the town.
 She will start from her slumber
 When gusts shake the door ;
 She will hear the winds howling,
 Will hear the waves roar.
 We shall see, while above us
 The waves roar and whirl,
 A ceiling of amber,
 A pavement of pearl.
 Singing : “ Here came a mortal,
 But faithless was she !
 And alone dwell for ever
 The kings of the sea.”

But, children, at midnight,
 When soft the winds blow,
 When clear falls the moonlight,
 When spring tides are low ;
 When sweet airs come seaward
 From heaths starr'd with broom,
 And high rocks throw mildly
 On the blanch'd sands a gloom ;
 Up the still, glistening beaches,
 Up the creeks we will hie,
 Over banks of bright seaweed
 The ebb-tide leaves dry.
 We will gaze, from the sand hills,
 At the white, sleeping town ;
 At the church on the hill-side—
 And then come back down.
 Singing : “ There dwells a loved one,
 But cruel is she !
 She left lonely for ever
 The kings of the sea.”

1849.

THE STRAYED REVELLER

THE PORTICO OF CIRCE'S PALACE
 EVENING

A Youth. Circe

The Youth

FASTER, faster,
 O Circe, Goddess,
 Let the wild, thronging train,
 The bright procession
 Of eddying forms,
 Sweep through my soul !

Thou standest, smiling
 Down on me ! thy right arm,
 Lean'd up against the column there.
 Props thy soft cheek ;
 Thy left holds, hanging loosely,
 The deep cup, ivy-cinctured,
 I held but now.

Is it, then, evening
 So soon ? I see, the night-dews,
 Cluster'd in thick beads, dim
 The agate brooch-stones
 On thy white shoulder ;
 The cool night-wind, too,
 Blows through the portico,
 Stirs thy hair, Goddess,
 Waves thy white robe !

Circe

Whence art thou, sleeper ?

The Youth

When the white dawn first
 Through the rough fir-planks
 Of my hut, by the chestnuts,
 Up at the valley-head,
 Came breaking. Goddess !
 I sprang up, I threw round me
 My dappled fawn-skin ;
 Passing out, from the wet turf,
 Where they lay, by the hut door,
 I snatch'd up my vine-crown, my fir-staff,
 All drench'd in dew—
 Came swift down to join
 The rout early gather'd
 In the town, round the temple,
 Iacchus' white fane
 On yonder hill.

Quick I pass'd, following
 The wood-cutters' cart-track
 Down the dark valley ;—I saw
 On my left, through the beeches,

Thy palace, Goddess,
Smokeless, empty !
Trembling, I enter'd ; beheld
The court all silent,
The lions sleeping,
On the altar this bowl.
I drank, Goddess !
And sank down here, sleeping,
On the steps of thy portico.

Circe

Foolish boy ! Why tremblest thou ?
Thou lovest it, then, my wine ?
Wouldst more of it ? See, how glows,
Through the delicate, flush'd marble,
The red, creaming liquor,
Strown with dark seeds !
Drink, then ! I clide thee not,
Deny thee not my bowl.
Come, stretch forth thy hand, then—so !
Drink—drink again !

The Youth

Thanks, gracious one !
Ah, the sweet fumes again !
More soft, ah me,
More subtle-winding
Than Pan's flute-music !
Faint—faint ! Ah me,
Again the sweet sleep !

Circe

Hist ! Thou—within there !
Come forth, Ulysses !
Art tired with hunting ?
While we range the woodland,
See what the day brings.

Ulysses

Ever new magic !
Hast thou then lured hither,
Wonderful Goddess, by thy art,
The young, land-ey'd Ampelus,
Iacchus' darling—
Or some youth beloved of Pan,
Of Pan and the Nymphs ?
That he sits, bending downward
His white, delicate neck
To the ivy-wreathed marge
Of thy cup ; the bright, glancing vine-
leaves
That crown his hair,
Falling forward, mingling
With the dark ivy-plants—
His fawn-skin, half untied,
Smear'd with red wine-stains ? Who is
he,
That he sits, overweigh'd

By fumes of wine and sleep,
So late, in thy portico ?
What youth, Goddess,—what guest
Of Gods or mortals ?

Circe

Hist ! he wakes !
I lured him not hither, Ulysses.
Nay, ask him !

The Youth

Who speaks ? Ah, who comes forth
To thy side, Goddess, from within ?
How shall I name him ?
This spare, dark-featured,
Quick-eyed stranger ?
Ah, and I see too
His sailor's bonnet.
His short coat, travel-tarnish'd,
With one arm bare !—
Art thou not he, whom fame
This long time rumors
The favor'd guest of Circe, brought by
the waves ?
Art thou he, stranger ?
The wise Ulysses,
Laertes' son ?

Ulysses

I am Ulysses.
And thou, too, sleeper ?
Thy voice is sweet.
It may be thou hast follow'd
Through the islands some divine bard,
By age taught many things,
Age and the Muses ;
And heard him delighting
The chiefs and people
In the banquet, and learn'd his songs,
Of Gods and Heroes,
Of war and arts,
And peopled cities,
Inland, or built
By the gray sea.—If so, then hail !
I honor and welcome thee.

The Youth

The Gods are happy.
They turn on all sides
Their shining eyes,
And see below them
The earth and men.

They see Tiresias
Sitting, staff in hand,
On the warm, grassy
Asopus bank,
His robe drawn over

His old, sightless head,
Revolving inly
The doom of Thebes.

They see the Centaurs
In the upper glens
Of Pelion, in the streams,
Where red-berried ashes fringe
The clear-brown shallow pools,
With streaming flanks, and heads
Rear'd proudly, snuffing
The mountain wind.

They see the Indian
Drifting, knife in hand,
His frail boat moor'd to
A floating isle thick-matted
With large-leaved, low-creeping melon-
plants,
And the dark cucumber.
He reaps, and stows them,
Drifting—drifting;—round him,
Round his green harvest-plot,
Flow the cool lake-waves,
The mountains ring them.

They see the Scythian
On the wide stepp, unharnessing
His wheel'd house at noon.
He tethers his beast down, and makes
his meal—
Mares' milk, and bread
Baked on the embers;—all around
The boundless, waving grass-plains
stretch, thick-starr'd
With saffron and the yellow hollyhock
And flag-leaved iris-flowers.
Sitting in his cart [miles,
He makes his meal; before him, for long
Alive with bright green lizards,
And the springing bustard-fowl,
The track, a straight black line,
Furrows the rich soil; here and there
Clusters of lonely mounds
Topp'd with rough-hewn,
Gray, rain-blear'd statues, overpeer
The sunny waste.

They see the ferry
On the broad, clay-laden
Lone Chorasmian stream; thereon,
With snort and strain,
Two horses, strongly swimming, tow
The ferry-boat, with woven ropes
To either bow
Firm harness'd by the mane; a chief
With shout and shaken spear,
Stands at the prow, and guides them;
but astern

The cowering merchants, in long robes
Sit pale beside their wealth
Of silk-bales and of balsam-drops,
Of gold and ivory,
Of turquoise-earth and amethyst,
Jasper and chalcedony,
And milk-barr'd onyx-stones.
The loaded boat swings groaning
In the yellow eddies;
The Gods behold them.

They see the Heroes
Sitting in the dark ship
On the foamless, long-heaving
Violet sea,
At sunset nearing
The Happy Islands.

These things, Ulysses,
The wise bards also
Behold and sing.
But oh, what labor!
O prince, what pain!

They too can see
Tiresias;—but the Gods,
Who give them vision,
Added this law:
That they should bear too
His groping blindness,
His dark foreboding,
His scorn'd white hairs;
Bear Hera's anger
Through a life lengthen'd
To seven ages.

They see the Centaurs
On Pelion;—then they feel,
They too, the maddening wine
Swell their large veins to bursting; in
wild pain
They feel the biting spears
Of the grim Lapithæ, and Theseus, drive,
Drive crashing through their bones;
they feel
High on a jutting rock in the red stream
Alcmena's dreadful son
Ply his bow; such a price
The Gods exact for song:
To become what we sing.

They see the Indian
On his mountain lake; but squalls
Make their skiff reel, and worms
In the unkind spring have gnawn
Their melon-harvest to the heart.—They
see
The Scythian; but long frosts
Parch them in winter-time on the bare
stepp.

Till they too fade like grass ; they crawl
Like shadows forth in spring.

They see the merchants
On the Oxus stream ;—but care
Must visit first them too, and make
them pale.

Whether, through whirling sand,
A cloud of desert robber-horse have
burst

Upon their caravan ; or greedy kings,
In the wall'd cities the way passes
through,

Crush'd them with tolls ; or fever-airs,
On some great river's marge,
Mown them down, far from home.

They see the Heroes
Near harbor ;—but they share
Their lives, and former violent toil in
Thebes.

Seven-gated Thebes, or Troy ;
Or where the echoing oars
Of Argo first
Startled the unknown sea.

The old Silenus
Came, lolling in the sunshine,
From the dewy forest-coverts,
This way at noon.
Sitting by me, while his Fauns
Down at the water-side
Sprinkled and smoothed
His drooping garland,
He told me these things.

But I, Ulysses,
Sitting on the warm steps,
Looking over the valley,
All day long, have seen,
Without pain, without labor,
Sometimes a wild-hair'd Mænad—
Sometimes a Faun with torches—
And sometimes, for a moiment,
Passing through the dark stems
Flowing-rob'd, the beloved,
The desire, the divine,
Beloved Iacchus.

Ah, cool night-wind, tremulous stars !
Ah, glimmering water,
Fitful earth-murmur,
Dreaming woods !
Ah, golden-haired, strangely smiling
Goddess,
And thou, proved, much enduring,
Wave-toss'd Wanderer !
Who can stand still ?
Ye fade, ye swim, ye waver before me—
The cup again !

Faster, faster,
O Circe, Goddess.
Let the wild, thronging train,
The bright procession
Of eddying forms,
Sweep through my soul !

1849.

MEMORIAL VERSES

APRIL, 1850

GOETHE in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,
Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease.
But one such death remain'd to come ;
The last poetic voice is dumb—
We stand to-day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,
We bow'd our head and held our breath.
He taught us little ; but our soul
Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.
With shivering heart the strife we saw
Of passion with eternal law ;
And yet with reverential awe
We watch'd the fount of fiery life
Which served for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we
said :

Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.
Physician of the iron age,
Goethe has done his pilgrimage.
He took the suffering human race,
He read each wound, each weakness
clear ;

And struck his finger on the place,
And said : *Thou ailest here, and here !*
He look'd on Europe's dying hour
Of fitful dream and feverish power ;
His eye plunged down the weltering
strife,

The turmoil of expiring life—
He said : *The end is everywhere,
Art still has truth, take refuge there !*
And he was happy, if to know
Causes of things, and far below
His feet to see the lurid flow
Of terror, and insane distress,
And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth !—Ah, pale ghosts
rejoice !
For never has such soothing voice
Been to your shadowy world convey'd.
Since erst, at morn, some wandering
shade
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come
Through Hades, and the mournful
gloom.

Wordsworth has gone from us—and ye,
 Ah, may ye feel his voice as we!
 He too upon a wintry clime
 Had fallen—on this iron time
 Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
 He found us when the age had bound
 Our souls in its benumbing round;
 He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.
 He laid us as we lay at birth
 On the cool flowery lap of earth,
 Smiles broke from us and we had ease;
 The hills were round us, and the breeze
 Went o'er the sun-lit fields again;
 Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
 Our youth returned; for there was shed
 On spirits that had long been dead,
 Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,
 The freshness of the early world.

Ah! since dark days still bring to light
 Man's prudence and man's fiery night,
 Time may restore us in his course
 Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;
 But where will Europe's latter hour
 Again find Wordsworth's healing
 power?

Others will teach us how to dare,
 And against fear our breast to steel;
 Others will strengthen us to bear—
 But who, ah! who, will make us feel?
 The cloud of mortal destiny,
 Others will front it fearlessly—
 But who, like him, will put it by?

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave
 O Rotha, with thy living wave!
 Sing him thy best! for few or none
 Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.
 1850.

SELF-DECEPTION

SAY, what blinds us, that we claim the
 glory
 Of possessing powers not our share?
 —Since man woke on earth, he knows
 his story,
 But, before we woke on earth, we were.

Long, long since, undower'd yet, our
 spirit
 Roam'd, ere birth, the treasures of God;
 Saw the gifts, the powers it might in-
 herit,
 Ask'd an outfit for its earthly road.

Then, as now, this tremulous, eager
 being
 Strain'd and long'd and grasp'd each gift
 it saw;

Then, as now, a Power beyond our see-
 ing,
 Staved us back, and gave our choice the
 law.

Ah, whose hand that day through
 Heaven guided
 Man's new spirit, since it was not we?
 Ah, who swayed our choice and who de-
 cided
 What our gifts, and what our wants
 should be?

For, alas! he left us each retaining
 Shreds of gifts which he refused in full.
 Still these waste us with their hopeless
 straining,
 Still the attempt to use them proves
 them null.

And on earth we wander, groping, reel-
 ing;
 Powers stir in us, stir and disappear.
 Ah! and he, who placed our master-
 feeling,
 Fail'd to place that master-feeling clear.

We but dream we have our wish'd-for
 powers,
 Ends we seek we never shall attain.
 Ah! some power exists there, which is
 ours?
 Some end is there, we indeed may gain!
 1852.

THE SECOND BEST

MODERATE tasks and moderate leisure,
 Quiet living, strict-kept measure
 Both in suffering and in pleasure—
 'Tis for this thy nature yearns.

But so many books thou readest,
 But so many schemes thou breedest,
 But so many wishes feedest,
 That thy poor head almost turns.

And (the world 's so madly jangled
 Human things so fast entangled)
 Nature's wish must now be strangled
 For that best which she discerns.

So it *must* be! yet, while leading
 A strain'd life, while overfeeding,
 Like the rest, his wit with reading,
 No small profit that man earns,

Who through all he meets can steer him
 Can reject what cannot clear him,
 Cling to what can truly cheer him;
 Who each day more surely learns

That an impulse, from the distance
Of his deepest, best existence,
To the words, "Hope, Light, Persist-
ence,"

Strongly sets and truly burns.

1852.

LYRIC STANZAS OF EMPEDOCLES

THE out-spread world to span
A cord the Gods first slung,
And then the soul of man
There, like a mirror, hung,
And bade the winds through space im-
pel the gusty toy.

Hither and thither spins
The wind-borne, mirroring soul,
A thousand glimpses wins,
And never sees a whole;
Looks once, and drives elsewhere, and
leaves its last employ.

The Gods laugh in their sleeve
To watch man doubt and fear
Who knows not what to believe
Since he sees nothing clear,
And dares stamp nothing false where
he finds nothing sure.

Is this, Pausanias, so?
And can our souls not strive,
But with the winds must go,
And hurry where they drive?
Is fate indeed so strong, man's strength
indeed so poor?

I will not judge. That man,
Howbeit, I judge as lost,
Whose mind allows a plan,
Which would degrade it most;
And he treats doubt the best who tries
to see least ill.

Be not, then, fear's blind slave!
Thou art my friend; to thee,
All knowledge that I have,
All skill I wield, are free.
Ask not the latest news of the last mir-
acle,

Ask not what days and nights
In trance Pantheia lay,
But ask how thou such sights
May'st see without dismay;
Ask what most helps when known, thou
son of Anchitus!

What? hate, and awe, and shame
Fill thee to see our time;

Thou feelest thy soul's frame
Shaken and out of chime?
What? life and chance go hard with thee
too, as with us;

Thy citizens, 'tis said,
Envy thee and oppress,
Thy goodness no men aid,
All strive to make it less;
Tyranny, pride, and lust, fill Sicily's
abodes;

Heaven is with earth at strife,
Signs make thy soul afraid,
The dead return to life,
Rivers are dried, winds stay'd;
Scarce can one think in calm, so threat-
ening are the Gods;

And we feel, day and night,
The burden of ourselves—
Well, then, the wiser wight
In his own bosom delves,
And asks what ails him so, and gets
what cure he can.

The sophist sneers: Fool, take
Thy pleasure, right or wrong.
The pious wail: Forsake
A world these sophists throng.
Be neither saint nor sophist-led, but be a
man!

These hundred doctors try
To preach thee to their school.
We have the truth! they cry;
And yet their oracle,
Trumpet it as they will, is but the same
as thine.

Once read thy own breast right,
And thou hast done with fears;
Man gets no other light,
Search he a thousand years.
Sink in thyself! there ask what ails thee,
at that shrine!

What makes thee struggle and rave?
Why are men ill at ease?—
'Tis that the lot they have
Fails their own will to please;
For man would make no murmuring
were his will obey'd.

And why is it, that still
Man with his lot thus fights?—
'Tis that he makes this *will*
The measure of his *rights*,
And believes Nature outraged if his will's
gainsaid.

Couldst thou, Pausanias, learn
How deep a fault is this ;
Couldst thou but once discern
Thou hast no *right* to bliss,
No title from the Gods to welfare and
repose ;

Then thou wouldst look less mazed
Whene'er of bliss debarr'd,
Nor think the Gods were crazed
When thy own lot went hard.
But we are all the same—the fools of our
own woes !

For, from the first faint morn
Of life, the thirst for bliss
Deep in man's heart is born ;
And, sceptic as he is,
He fails not to judge clear if this be
quench'd or no.

Nor is the thirst to blame.
Man errs not that he deems
His welfare his true aim,
He errs because he dreams
The world does but exist that welfare to
bestow.

We mortals are no kings
For each of whom to sway
A new-made world up-springs,
Meant merely for his play ;
No, we are strangers here ; the world is
from of old.

In vain our pent wills fret,
And would the world subdue.
Limits we did not set
Condition all we do ;
Born into life we are, and life must be
our mould.

Born into life !—man grows
Forth from his parents' stem,
And blends their bloods, as those
Of theirs are blent in them ;
So each new man strikes root into a far
fore-time.

Born into life !—we bring
A bias with us here,
And, when here, each new thing
Affects us we come near ;
To tunes we did not call our being must
keep chime.

Born into life !—in vain,
Opinions, those or these,
Unalter'd to retain

The obstinate mind decrees ;
Experience, like a sea, soaks all-effacing
in.

Born into life !—who lists
May what is false hold dear,
And for himself make mists
Through which to see less clear ;
The world is what it is, for all our dust
and din.

Born into life !—'tis we,
And not the world, are new ;
Our cry for bliss, our plea,
Others have urged it too—
Our wants have all been felt, our errors
made before.

No eye could be too sound
To observe a world so vast,
No patience too profound
To sort what's here amass'd ;
How man may here best live no care
too great to explore.

But we—as some rude guest
Would change, where'er he roam,
The manners there profess'd
To those he brings from home—
We mark not the world's course, but
would have *it* take *ours*.

The world's course proves the terms
On which man wins content ;
Reason the proof confirms—
We spurn it, and invent
A false course for the world, and for
ourselves, false powers.

Riches we wish to get,
Yet remain spendthrifts still ;
We would have health, and yet
Still use our bodies ill ;
Bafflers of our own prayers, from youth
to life's last scenes.

We would have inward peace,
Yet will not look within ;
We would have misery cease,
Yet will not cease from sin ;
We want all pleasant ends, but will use
no harsh means ;

We do not what we ought,
What we ought not, we do,
And lean upon the thought
That chance will bring us through ;
But our own acts, for good or ill, are
mightier powers.

Yet, even when man forsakes
 All sin,—is just, is pure,
 Abandons all which makes
 His welfare insecure,—
 Other existences there are, that clash
 with ours.

Like us, the lightning-fires
 Love to have scope and play;
 The stream, like us, desires
 An unimpeded way;
 Like us, the Libyan wind delights to
 roam at large.

Streams will not curb their pride
 The just man not to entomb,
 Nor lightnings go aside
 To give his virtues room;
 Nor is that wind less rough which blows
 a good man's barge.

Nature, with equal mind,
 Sees all her sons at play;
 Sees man control the wind,
 The wind sweep man away;
 Allows the proudly-riding and the
 foundering bark.

And, lastly, though of ours
 No weakness spoil our lot,
 Though the non-human powers
 Of Nature harm us not,
 The ill deeds of other men make often
 our life dark.

What were the wise man's plan?—
 Through this sharp, toil-set life,
 To work as best he can,
 And win what's won by strife.—
 But we an easier way to cheat our pains
 have found.

Scratch'd by a fall, with moans
 As children of weak age
 Lend life to the dumb stones
 Whereon to vent their rage,
 And bend their little fists, and rate the
 senseless ground;

So, loath to suffer mute,
 We, peopling the void air,
 Make Gods to whom to impute
 The ills we ought to bear;
 With God and Fate to rail at, suffering
 easily.

Yet grant—as sense long miss'd
 Things that are now perceived,
 And much may still exist

Which is not yet believed—
 Grant that the world were full of Gods
 we cannot see;

All things the world which fill
 Of but one stuff are spun,
 That we who rail are still,
 With what we rail at, one;
 One with the o'erlabored Power that
 through the breadth and length

Of earth, and air, and sea,
 In men, and plants, and stones,
 Hath toil perpetually,
 And travails, pants, and moans;
 Fain would do all things well, but some-
 times fails in strength.

And patiently exact
 This universal God
 Alike to any act
 Proceeds at any nod,
 And quietly declaims the cursings of
 himself.

This is not what man hates,
 Yet he can curse but this.
 Harsh Gods and hostile Fates
 Are dreams! this only is
 Is everywhere; sustains the wise, the
 foolish elf.

Not only, in the intent
 To attach blame elsewhere,
 Do we at will invent
 Stern Powers who make their care
 To embitter human life, malignant
 Deities;

But, next, we would reverse
 The scheme ourselves have spun,
 And what we made to curse
 We now would lean upon,
 And feign kind Gods who perfect what
 man vainly tries.

Look, the world tempts our eye,
 And we would know it all!
 We map the starry sky,
 We mine this earthen ball,
 We measure the sea-tides, we number
 the sea-sands;

We scrutinise the dates
 Of long-past human things,
 The bounds of effaced states,
 The lines of deceased kings;
 We search out dead men's words, and
 works of dead men's hands:

We shut our eyes, and muse
How our own minds are made,
What springs of thought they use,
How righten'd, how betray'd—
And spend our wit to name what most
employ unnamed.

But still, as we proceed
The mass swells more and more
Of volumes yet to read,
Of secrets yet to explore.
Our hair grows gray, our eyes are
dimin'd, our heat is tamed;

We rest our faculties,
And thus address the Gods:
"True science if there is,
It stays in your abodes!
Man's measures cannot mete the im-
measurable All.

"You only can take in
The world's immense design.
Our desperate search was sin,
Which henceforth we resign,
Sure only that your mind sees all things
which befall."

Fools! That in man's brief term
He cannot all things view,
Affords no ground to affirm
That there are Gods who do;
Nor does being weary prove that he has
where to rest.

Again.—Our youthful blood
Claims rapture as its right;
The world, a rolling flood
Of newness and delight,
Draws in the enamor'd gazer to its
shining breast;

Pleasure, to our hot grasp,
Gives flowers after flowers;
With passionate warmth we clasp
Hand after hand in ours;
Now do we soon perceive how fast our
youth is spent.

At once our eyes grow clear!
We see, in blank dismay,
Year posting after year,
Sense after sense decay;
Our shivering heart is mined by secret
discontent;

Yet still, in spite of truth,
In spite of hopes entomb'd,
That longing of our youth

Burns ever unconsumed,
Still hungrier for delight as delights
grow more rare.

We pause; we hush our heart,
And thus address the Gods:
"The world hath fail'd to impart
The joy our youth forebodes,
Fail'd to fill up the void which in our
breasts we bear.

"Changeful till now, we still
Look'd on to something new;
Let us, with changeless will,
Henceforth look on to you,
To find with you the joy we in vain here
require!"

Fools! That so often here
Happiness mock'd our prayer,
I think, might make us fear
A like event elsewhere;
Make us, not fly to dreams, but moderate
desire.

And yet, for those who know
Themselves, who wisely take
Their way through life, and bow
To what they cannot break,
Why should I say that life need yield
but moderate bliss?

Shall we, with temper spoil'd,
Health sapp'd by living ill,
And judgment all embroil'd
By sadness and self-will,
Shall we judge what for man is not true
bliss or is?

Is it so small a thing
To have enjoy'd the sun,
To have lived light in the spring,
To have loved, to have thought, to
have done;
To have advanced true friends, and beat
down baffling foes—

That we must feign a bliss
Of doubtful future date,
And, while we dream on this,
Lose all our present state,
And relegate to worlds yet distant our
repose?

Not much, I know, you prize
What pleasures may be had,
Who look on life with eyes
Estranged, like mine, and sad;
And yet the village-churl feels the truth
more than you.

Who's loath to leave this life
Which to him little yields—
His hard-task'd sunburnt wife,
His often-labor'd fields,
The boors with whom he talk'd, the
country-spots he knew.

But thou, because thou hear'st
Men scoff at Heaven and Fate,
Because the Gods thou fear'st
Fail to make blest thy state,
Tremblest, and wilt not dare to trust
the joys there are !

I say : Fear not ! Life still
Leaves human effort scope.
But, since life teems with ill,
Nurse no extravagant hope ;
Because thou must not dream, thou
need'st not then despair ! 1852.

CALLICLES' SONG

FROM EMPEDOCLES ON ETNA

THROUGH the black, rushing smoke-
bursts,
Thick breaks the red flame ;
All Etna heaves fiercely
Her forest-clothed frame.

Not here, O Apollo !
Are haunts meet for thee.
But, where Helicon breaks down
In cliff to the sea,

Where the moon-silver'd inlets
Send far their light voice
Up the still vale of Thisbe,
O speed, and rejoice !

On the sward at the cliff-top
Lie strewn the white flocks,
On the cliff-side the pigeons
Roost deep in the rocks.

In the moonlight the shepherds,
Soft lull'd by the rills,
Lie wrapped in their blankets
Asleep on the hills.

—What forms are these coming
So white through the gloom ?
What garments out-glistening
The gold-flower'd broom ?

What sweet-breathing presence
Out-perfumes the thyme ?
What voices enrapture
The night's balmy prime ?—

'Tis Apollo comes leading
His choir, the Nine.
—The leader is fairest,
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows !
They stream up again !
What seeks on this mountain
The glorified train ?—

They bathe on this mountain,
In the spring by their road ;
Then on to Olympus,
Their endless abode.

—Whose praise do they mention .
Of what is it told ?—
What will be for ever ;
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father
Of all things ; and then,
The rest of immortals,
The action of men ;

The day in his hotness,
The strife with the palm ;
The night in her silence,
The stars in their calm. 1852

THE YOUTH OF NATURE

RAISED are the dripping oars,
Silent the boat ! the lake,
Lovely and soft as a dream,
Swims in the sheen of the moon.
The mountains stand at its head
Clear in the pure June-night,
But the valleys are flooded with haze.
Rydal and Fairfield are there ;
In the shadow Wordsworth lies dead.
So it is, so it will be for aye.
Nature is fresh as of old,
Is lovely ; a mortal is dead.

The spots which recall him survive,
For he lent a new life to these hills.
The Pillar still broods o'er the fields
Which border Ennerdale Lake,
And Egremont sleeps by the sea.
The gleam of The Evening Star
Twinkles on Grasmere no more,
But ruin'd and solemn and gray
The sheepfold of Michael survives ;
And, far to the south, the heath
Still blows in the Quancock coombs
By the favorite waters of Ruth.
These survive !—yet not without pain.
Pain and dejection to-night,
Can I feel that their poet is gone.

He grew old in an age he condemn'd,
 He look'd on the rushing decay
 Of the times which had shelter'd his
 youth,
 Felt the dissolving throes
 Of a social order he loved;
 Outlived his brethren, his peers;
 And, like the Theban seer,
 Died in his enemies' day.

Cold bubbled the spring of Tilphusa,
 Copais lay bright in the moon,
 Helicon glass'd in the lake
 Its firs, and afar rose the peaks
 Of Parnassus, snowily clear;
 Thebes was behind him in flames,
 And the clang of arms in his ear,
 When his awe-struck captors led
 The Theban seer to the spring.
 Tiresias drank and died,
 Nor did reviving Thebes
 See such a prophet again.

Well may we mourn, when the head
 Of a sacred poet lies low
 In an age which can rear them no more!
 The complaining millions of men
 Darken in labor and pain;
 But he was a priest to us all
 Of the wonder and bloom of the world,
 Which we saw with his eyes, and were
 glad.

He is dead, and the fruit-bearing day
 Of his race is past on the earth;
 And darkness returns to our eyes.

For, oh! is it you, is it you,
 Moonlight, and shadow, and lake,
 And mountains, that fill us with joy,
 Or the poet who sings you so well?
 Is it you, O beauty, O grace,
 O charm, O romance, that we feel,
 Or the voice which reveals what you are?
 Are ye, like daylight and sun,
 Shared and rejoiced in by all?
 Or are ye immersed in the mass
 Of matter, and hard to extract,
 Or sunk at the core of the world
 Too deep for the most to discern?
 Like stars in the deep of the sky,
 Which arise on the glass of the sage,
 But are lost when their watcher is gone.

"They are here"—I heard, as men heard
 In Mysian Ida the voice
 Of the Mighty Mother, or Crete,
 The murmur of Nature reply—
 "Loveliness, magic, and grace,
 They are here! they are set in the world.
 They abide; and the finest of souls

Hath not been thrill'd by them all,
 Nor the dullest been dead to them quite.
 The poet who sings them may die,
 But they are immortal and live,
 For they are the life of the world.
 Will ye not learn it, and know,
 When ye mourn that a poet is dead,
 That the singer was less than his themes,
 Life, and emotion, and I?

"More than the singer are these.
 Weak is the tremor of pain
 That thrills in his mournfullest chord
 To that which once ran through his soul.
 Cold the elation of joy
 In his gladdest, airiest song,
 To that which of old in his youth
 Fill'd him and made him divine.
 Hardly his voice at its best
 Gives us a sense of the awe,
 The vastness, the grandeur, the gloom
 Of the unlit gulf of himself.

"Ye know not yourselves; and your
 bards—
 The clearest, the best, who have read
 Most in themselves—have beheld
 Less than they left unreveal'd.
 Ye express not yourselves;—can you
 make
 With marble, with color, with word,
 What charm'd you in others re-live?
 Can thy pencil, O artist! restore
 The figure, the bloom of thy love,
 As she was in her morning of spring?
 Canst thou paint the ineffable smile
 Of her eyes as they rested on thine?
 Can the image of life have the glow,
 The motion of life itself?

"Yourselves and your fellows ye know
 not; and me,
 The mateless, the one, will ye know?
 Will ye scan me, and read me, and tell
 Of the thoughts that ferment in my
 breast,
 My longing, my sadness, my joy?
 Will ye claim for your great ones the
 gift
 To have render'd the gleam of my skies,
 To have echoed the moan of my seas,
 Utter'd the voice of my hills?
 When your great ones depart, will ye
 say:
*All things have suffer'd a loss,
 Nature is hid in their grave?*

"Race after race, man after man,
 Have thought that my secret was theirs,
 Have dream'd that I lived but for them,

That they were my glory and joy.
—They are dust, they are changed, they
are gone!
I remain.” 1852.

SELF-DEPENDENCE

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears
me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:
“Ye who from my childhood up have
calm'd me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

“Ah, once more,” I cried, “ye stars, ye
waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew:
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!”

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault
of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the an-
swer: [they.
“Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as

“Unaffrighted by the silence round
them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things with-
out them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

“And with joy the stars perform their
shining,
And the sea its long moon-silver'd roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with
noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

“Bounded by themselves, and unregard-
ful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers
pouring.
These attain the mighty life you see.”

O air-born voice! long since, severely
clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I
hear: [he,
“Resolve to be thyself; and know that
Who finds himself, loses his misery!”
1852.

MORALITY

WE cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides;
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight will'd
Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 't were done.
Not till the hours of light return,
All we have built do we discern.

Then, when the clouds are off the soul,
When thou dost bask in Nature's eye,
Ask, how *she* view'd thy self-control,
Thy struggling, task'd morality—
Nature, whose free, light, cheerful air,
Oft made thee, in thy gloom, despair.

And she, whose censure thou dost dread,
Whose eye thou wast afraid to seek,
See, on her face a glow is spread,
A strong emotion on her cheek!
“Ah, child!” she cries, “that strife
divine,
Whence was it, for it is not mine?”

“There is no effort on *my* brow—
I do not strive, I do not weep;
I rush with the swift spheres and glow
In joy, and when I will, I sleep.
Yet that severe, that earnest air,
I saw, I felt it once—but where?”

“I knew not yet the gauge of time,
Nor wore the manacles of space;
I felt it in some other clime,
I saw it in some other place.
’Twas when the heavenly house I trod,
And lay upon the breast of God.”
1852.

A SUMMER NIGHT

In the deserted, moon-blanch'd street,
How lonely rings the echo of my feet!
Those windows, which I gaze at, frown,
Silent and white, unopening down,
Repellant as the world;—but see,
A break between the housetops shows
The moon! and, lost behind her, fading
dim
Into the dewy dark obscurity
Down at the far horizon's rim.
Doth a whole tract of heaven disclose!

And to my mind the thought
Is on a sudden brought
Of a past night, and a far different scene.
Headlands stood out into the moonlit
deep

As clearly as at noon;
The spring-tide's brimming flow
Heaved dazzlingly between;

Houses, with long white sweep,
Girdled the glistening bay;
Behind, through the soft air,
The blue haze-cradled mountains spread
away,

The night was far more fair—
But the same restless paces to and fro,
And the same vainly throbbing heart
was there,
And the same bright, calm moon.

And the calm moonlight seems to say :
*Hast thou then still the old unquiet breast,
Which neither deadens into rest,
Nor ever feels the fiery glow
That whirls the spirit from itself away,
But fluctuates to and fro,
Never by passion quite possess'd
And never quite benumb'd by the world's
sway ?—*

And I, I know not if to pray
Still to be what I am, or yield and be
Like all the other men I see.

For most men in a brazen prison live,
Where, in the sun's hot eye,
With heads bent o'er their toil, they
languidly
Their lives to some unmeaning taskwork
give,
Dreaming of nought beyond their prison
wall.

And as, year after year,
Fresh products of their barren labor fall
From their tired hands, and rest
Never yet comes more near,
Gloom settles slowly down over their
breast ;

And while they try to stem
The waves of mournful thought by
which they are pressed,
Death in their prison reaches them,
Unfreed, having seen nothing, still un-
blest.

And the rest, a few,
Escape their prison and depart
On the wide ocean of life anew.
There the freed prisoner, where'er his
heart

Listeth, will sail ;
Nor doth he know how there prevail,
Despotic on that sea,
Trade-winds which cross it from eternity
Awhile he holds some false way, unde-
barr'd

By thwarting signs, and braves
The freshening wind and blackening
waves

And then the tempest strikes him ; and
between

The lightning-bursts is seen
Only a driving wreck,
And the pale master on his spar-strewn
deck

With anguish'd face and flying hair
Grasping the rudder hard,
Still bent to make some port he knows
not where,

Still standing for some false, impossible
shore.

And sterner comes the roar
Of sea and wind, and through the deep-
ening gloom

Fainter and fainter wreck and helmsman
loom,

And he too disappears, and comes no
more.

Is there no life, but these alone ?
Madman or slave, must man be one ?

Plainness and clearness without shadow
of stain !

Clearness divine !

Ye heavens, whose pure dark regions
have no sign

Of languor, though so calm, and, though
so great,

Are yet untroubled and unpassionate ;
Who, though so noble, share in the
world's toil,

And, though so task'd, keep free from
dust and soil !

I will not say that your mild deeps retain
A tinge, it may be, of their silent pain
Who have long'd deeply once, and long'd
in vain—

But I will rather say that you remain
A world above man's head, to let him
see

How boundless might his soul's horizons
be,

How vast, yet of what clear trans-
parency !

How it were good to abide there, and
breathe free ;

How fair a lot to fill
Is left to each man still !

THE BURIED LIFE

LIGHT flows our war of mocking words,
and yet,

Behold, with tears mine eyes are wet !
I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll,
Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,
We know, we know that we can smile !
But there's a something in this breast,
To which thy light words bring no rest.
And thy gay smiles no anodyne.
Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,
And turn those limpid eyes on mine,
And let me read there, love ! thy inmost
soul.

Alas ! is even love too weak
To unlock the heart, and let it speak ?
Are even lovers powerless to reveal
To one another what indeed they feel ?
I knew the mass of men conceal'd
Their thoughts, for fear that if reveal'd
They would by other men be met
With blank indifference, or with blame
reproved ;

I knew they lived and moved
Trick'd in disguises, alien to the rest
Of men, and alien to themselves—and
yet

The same heart beats in every human
breast !

But we, my love !—doth a like spell be-
numb

Our hearts, our voices ?—must we too be
dumb ?

Ah ! well for us, if even we,
Even for a moment, can get free
Our heart, and have our lips unchain'd ;
For that which seals them hath been
deep-ordain'd !

Fate, which foresaw
How frivolous a baby man would be—
By what distractions he would be pos-
sess'd,

How he would pour himself in every
strife,

And well-nigh change his own identity—
That it might keep from his capricious
play

His genuine self, and force him to obey
Even in his own despite his being's law,
Bade through the deep recesses of our
breast

The unregarded river of our life
Pursue with indiscernible flow its way ;
And that we should not see
The buried stream, and seem to be

Eddying at large in blind uncertainty,
Though driving on with it eternally.

But often, in the world's most crowded
streets,

But often, in the din of strife,
There rises an unspeakable desire
After the knowledge of our buried life ;
A thirst to spend our fire and restless
force

In tracking out our true, original
course ;

A longing to inquire
Into the mystery of this heart which
beats

So wild, so deep in us—to know
Whence our lives come and where they
go.

And many a man in his own breast then
delves,

But deep enough, alas ! none ever mines.
And we have been on many thousand
lines,

And we have shown, on each, spirit and
power ;

But hardly have we, for one little hour,
Been on our own line, have we been
ourselves—

Hardly had skill to utter one of all
The nameless feelings that course
through our breast,

But they course on for ever unexpress'd.
And long we try in vain to speak and act

Our hidden self, and what we say and do
Is eloquent, is well—but 'tis not true !

And then we will no more be rack'd
With inward striving, and demand
Of all the thousand nothings of the hour
Their stupefying power ;

Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call !
Yet still, from time to time, vague and
forlorn,

From the soul's subterranean depth up-
borne

As from an infinitely distant land,
Come airs, and floating echoes, and con-
vey

A melancholy into all our day.

Only—but this is rare—

When a beloved hand is laid in ours,
When, jaded with the rush and glare
Of the interminable hours,
Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,
When our world-deafen'd ear
Is by the tones of a loved voice caress'd—
A bolt is shot back somewhere in our
breast,

And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again.

The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies
plain,
And what we mean, we say, and what
we would, we know.
A man becomes aware of his life's flow,
And hears its winding murmur; and he
sees
The meadows where it glides, the sun,
the breeze.

And there arrives a lull in the hot race
Wherein he doth for ever chase
That flying and elusive shadow, rest.
An air of coolness plays upon his face,
And an unwonted calm pervades his
breast.
And then he thinks he knows
The hills where his life rose,
And the sea where it goes. 1852.

LINES

WRITTEN IN KENSINGTON GARDENS

In this lone, open glade I lie,
Screen'd by deep boughs on either hand;
And at its end, to stay the eye,
Those black-crown'd, red-boled pine-
trees stand!

Birds here make song, each bird has his,
Across the girdling city's hum,
How green under the boughs it is!
How thick the tremulous sheep-cries
come!

Sometimes a child will cross the glade
To take his nurse his broken toy;
Sometimes a thrush flit overhead
Deep in her unknown day's employ.

Here at my feet what wonders pass,
What endless, active life is here!
What blowing daisies, fragrant grass!
An air-stirr'd forest, fresh and clear.

Scarce fresher is the mountain-sod
Where the tired angler lies, stretch'd
out,
And, eased of basket and of rod,
Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout.

In the huge world, which roars hard by,
Be others happy if they can!
But in my helpless cradle I
Was breathed on by the rural Pan

I, on men's impious uproar hurl'd,
Think often, as I hear them rave,
That peace has left the upper world
And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace for ever new!
When I who watch them am away,
Still all things in this glade go through
The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass!
The flowers upclose, the birds are fed,
The night comes down upon the grass,
The child sleeps warmly in his bed.

Calm soul of all things! make it mine
To feel, amid the city's jar,
That there abides a peace of thine,
Man did not make, and cannot mar.

The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die
Before I have begun to live. 1852.

THE FUTURE

A WANDERER is man from his birth.
He was born in a ship
On the breast of the river of Time;
Brimming with wonder and joy
He spreads out his arms to the light,
Rivets his gaze on the banks of the
stream.

As what he sees is, so have his thoughts
been.

Whether he wakes
Where the snowy mountainous pass,
Echoing the screams of the eagles,
Hems in its gorges the bed
Of the new-born clear-flowing stream;
Whether he first sees light
Where the river in gleaming rings
Sluggishly winds through the plain;
Whether in sound of the swallowing sea--
As is the world on the banks,
So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each, as he glides,
Fable and dream
Of the lands which the river of Time
Had left ere he woke on its breast,
Or shall reach when his eyes have been
closed.

Only the tract where he sails
He wots of; only the thoughts,
Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more
As she was by the sources of Time?
Who imagines her fields as they lay
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough?
Who thinks as they thought, [breast,
The tribes who then roam'd on her
Her vigorous, primitive sons?

What girl
Now reads in her bosom as clear
As Rebekah read, when she sate
At eve by the palm-shaded well?
Who guards in her breast
As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure?

What bard,
At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul,
With a plainness as near,
As flashing as Moses felt
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the starlit Arabian waste?
Can rise and obey
The beck of the Spirit like him?

This tract which the river of Time
Now flows through with us, is the plain.
Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.
Border'd by cities and hoarse
With a thousand cries is its stream.
And we on its breast, our minds
Are confused as the cries which we hear,
Changing and shot as the sights which
we see.

And we say that repose has fled
For ever the course of the river of Time.
That cities will crowd to its edge
In a blacker, incessanter line;
That the din will be more on its banks,
Denser the trade on its stream,
Flatter the plain where it flows,
Fiercer the sun overhead.
That never will those on its breast
See an ennobling sight,
Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed.

Haply, the river of Time—
As it grows, as the towns on its marge
Fling their wavering lights
On a wider, statelier stream—
May acquire, if not the calm
Of its early mountainous shore,
Yet a solemn peace of its own.

And the width of the waters, the hush
Of the gray expanse where he floats,
Freshening its current and spotted with
foam

As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
Peace to the soul of the man on its
breast—

As the pale waste widens around him,
As the banks fade dimmer away,

As the stars come out, and the night-
wind
Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.
1852.

STANZAS IN MEMORY OF THE AUTHOR OF "OBERMANN"¹

In front the awful Alpine track
Crawls up its rocky stair;
The autumn storm-winds drive the rack,
Close o'er it, in the air.

¹ The author of *Obermann*, Étienne Pivert de Senancour, has little celebrity in France, his own country; and out of France he is almost unknown. But the profound inwardness, the austere sincerity, of his principal work, *Obermann*, the delicate feeling for nature which it exhibits, and the melancholy eloquence of many passages of it, have attracted and charmed some of the most remarkable spirits of this century, such as George Sand and Sainte-Beuve, and will probably always find a certain number of spirits whom they touch and interest.

Senancour was born in 1770. He was educated for the priesthood, and passed some time in the seminary of St. Sulpice; broke away from the Seminary and from France itself, and passed some years in Switzerland, where he married; returned to France in middle life, and followed thenceforward the career of a man of letters, but with hardly any fame or success. He died an old man in 1846, desiring that on his grave might be placed these words only: *Eternité, deviens mon asile!*

The influence of Rousseau, and certain affinities with more famous and fortunate authors of his own day,—Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël,—are everywhere visible in Senancour. But though, like these eminent personages, he may be called a sentimental writer, and though *Obermann*, a collection of letters from Switzerland treating almost entirely of nature and of the human soul, may be called a work of sentiment, Senancour has a gravity and severity which distinguish him from all other writers of the sentimental school. The world with him in his solitude far less than it is with them; of all writers he is the most perfectly isolated and the least attitudinizing. His chief work, too, has a value and power of its own, apart from these merits of its author. The stir of all the main forces, by which modern life is and has been impelled, lives in the letters of *Obermann*; the dissolving agencies of the eighteenth century, the fiery storm of the French Revolution, the first faint promise and dawn of that new world which our own time is but more fully bringing to light,—all these are to be felt, almost to be touched, there. To me, indeed, it will always seem that the impressiveness of this production can hardly be rated too high.

Beside *Obermann* there is one other of Senancour's works which, for those spirits who feel his attraction, is very interesting; its title is, *Libres Méditations d'un Solitaire Inconnu*. (Arnold's note. The passage of George Sand alluded to may be found in her *Questions d'Art et de Littérature*. Sainte-Beuve has several times written of Senancour; especially in his *Portraits Contemporains*, Vol. I, and in *Chateaubriand et son Groupe littéraire*, Chap. 14.)

Behind are the abandon'd baths ¹
Mute in their meadows lone;
The leaves are on the valley-paths,
The mists are on the Rhone—

The white mists rolling like a sea!
I hear the torrents roar.
—Yes, Obermann, all speaks of thee;
I feel thee near once more!

I turn thy leaves! I feel their breath
Once more upon me roll;
That air of languor, cold, and death,
Which brooded o'er thy soul.

Fly hence, poor wretch, whoe'er thou art,
Condemn'd to cast about,
All shipwreck in thy own weak heart,
For comfort from without!

A fever in these pages burns
Beneath the calm they feign;
A wounded human spirit turns,
Here, on its bed of pain.

Yes, though the virgin mountain-air
Fresh through these pages blows;
Though to these leaves the glaciers spare
The soul of their white snows;

Though here a mountain-murmur swells
Of many a dark-bough'd pine;
Though, as you read, you hear the bells
Of the high-pasturing kine—

Yet, through the hum of torrent lone,
And brooding mountain-bee,
There sobs I know not what ground-tone
Of human agony.

Is it for this, because the sound
Is fraught too deep with pain,
That, Obermann! the world around
So little loves thy strain?

Some secrets may the poet tell,
For the world loves new ways;
To tell too deep ones is not well—
It knows not what he says.

Yet, of the spirits who have reign'd
In this our troubled day,
I know but two, who have attain'd
Save thee, to see their way.

By England's lakes, in gray old age,
His quiet home one keeps;
And one, the strong much-toiling sage,
In German Weimar sleeps.

But Wordsworth's eyes avert their ken
From half of human fate;
And Goethe's course few sons of men
May think to emulate.

For he pursued a lonely road,
His eyes on Nature's plan;
Neither made man too much a God,
Nor God too much a man.

Strong was he, with a spirit free
From mists, and sane, and clear;
Clearer, how much! than ours—yet we
Have a worse course to steer.

For though his manhood bore the blast
Of a tremendous time,
Yet in a tranquil world was pass'd
His tenderer youthful prime.

But we, brought forth and rear'd in hours
Of change, alarm, surprise—
What shelter to grow ripe is ours?
What leisure to grow wise?

Like children bathing on the shore,
Buried a wave beneath,
The second wave succeeds, before
We have had time to breathe.

Too fast we live, too much are tried,
Too harass'd, to attain
Wordsworth's sweet calm, or Goethe's
wide
And luminous view to gain.

And then we turn, thou sadder sage,
To thee! we feel thy spell!
—The hopeless tangle of our age,
Thou too hast scan'd it well!

Immoveable thou sittest, still
As death, composed to bear!
Thy head is clear, thy feeling chill,
And icy thy despair.

Yes, as the son of Thetis said,
I hear thee saying now:
*Greater by far than thou are dead;
Strive not! die also thou!*

Ah! two desires toss about
The poet's feverish blood.
One drives him to the world without.
And one to solitude.

¹ The Baths of Leuk. This poem was conceived, and partly composed, in the valley going down from the foot of the Gemmi Pass towards the Rhone. (Arnold.)

*The glow, he cries, the thrill of life,
Where, where do these abound?—
Not in the world, not in the strife
Of men, shall they be found.*

He who hath watch'd, not shared, the
 strife,
Knows how the day hath gone.
He only lives with the world's life,
Who hath renounced his own.

To thee we come, then! Clouds are roll'd
Where thou, O seer! art set;
Thy realm of thought is drear and cold—
The world is colder yet!

And thou hast pleasures, too, to share
With those who come to thee—
Balm floating on thy mountain-air,
And healing sights to see.

How often, where the slopes are green
On Jaman, hast thou sate
By some high chalet-door, and seen
The summer-day grow late;

And darkness steal o'er the wet grass
With the pale crocus starr'd,
And reach that glimmering sheet of
 glass
Beneath the piny sward,

Lake Leman's waters, far below!
And watch'd the rosy light
Fade from the distant peaks of snow;
And on the air of night

Heard accents of the eternal tongue
Through the pine branches play—
Listen'd, and felt thyself grow young!
Listen'd and wept—Away!

Away the dreams that but deceive
And thou, sad guide, adieu!
I go, fate drives me; but I leave
Half of my life with you.

We, in some unknown Power's employ,
Move on a rigorous line;
Can neither, when we will, enjoy,
Nor, when we will, resign.

I in the world must live; but thou,
Thou melancholy shade!
Wilt not, if thou canst see me now,
Condemn me, nor upbraid.

For thou art gone away from earth,
And place with those dost claim,
The Children of the Second Birth,
Whom the world could not tame;

And with that small, transfigured band,
Whom many a different way
Conducted to their common land,
Thou learn'st to think as they.

Christian and pagan, king and slave,
Soldier and anchorite,
Distinctions we esteem so grave,
Are nothing in their sight.

They do not ask, who pined unseen,
Who was on action hurl'd,
Whose one bond is, that all have been
Unspotted by the world.

There without anger thou wilt see
Him who obeys thy spell
No more, so he but rest, like thee,
Unsoil'd!—and so, farewell.

Farewell!—Whether thou now liest near
That much-loved inland sea,
The ripples of whose blue waves cheer
Vevey and Meillerie:

And in that gracious region bland,
Where with clear-rustling wave
The scented pines of Switzerland
Stand dark round thy green grave,

Between the dusty vineyard-walls
Issuing on that green place
The early peasant still recalls
The pensive stranger's face,

And stoops to clear thy moss-grown date
Ere he plods on again;—
Or whether, by maligner fate,
Among the swarms of men,

Where between granite terraces
The blue Seine rolls her wave,
The Capital of Pleasure sees
The hardly-heard-of grave;—

Farewell! Under the sky we part,
In the stern Alpine dell.
O unstrung will! O broken heart!
A last, a last farewell! 1852.

W REQUIESCAT

STREW on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
 In mazes of heat and sound.
 But for peace her soul was yearning,
 And now peace laps her round.

Her cabin'd, ample spirit,
 It flutter'd and fail'd for breath.
 To-night it doth inherit
 The vasty hall of death. 1853.

SOHRAB AND RUSTUM

AND the first gray of morning fill'd the
 east,
 And the fog rose out of the Oxus stream.
 But all the Tartar camp along the stream
 Was hush'd, and still the men were
 plunged in sleep;
 Sohrab alone, he slept not; all night long
 He had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed;
 But when the gray dawn stole into his
 tent,
 He rose, and clad himself, and girt his
 sword,
 And took his horseman's cloak, and left
 his tent;
 And went abroad into the cold wet fog,
 Through the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's
 tent.
 Through the black Tartar tents he
 pass'd, which stood
 Clustering like beehives on the low flat
 strand
 Of Oxus, where, the summer-floods o'er-
 flow
 When the sun melts the snows in high
 Pamere;
 Through the black tents he pass'd, o'er
 that low strand,
 And to a hillock came, a little back
 From the stream's brink—the spot where
 first a boat,
 Crossing the stream in summer, scrapes
 the land.
 The men of former times had crown'd
 the top
 With a clay fort; but that was fall'n,
 and now
 The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's tent,
 A dome of laths, and o'er it felts were
 spread.
 And Sohrab came there, and went in, and
 stood
 Upon the thick piled carpets in the tent,
 And found the old man sleeping on his
 bed
 Of rugs and felts, and near him lay his
 arms, [step
 And Peran-Wisa heard him, though the

Was dull'd; for he slept light, an old
 man's sleep;
 And he rose quickly on one arm, and
 said:—

“Who art thou? for it is not yet clear
 dawn.
 Speak! is there news, or any night
 alarm?”

But Sohrab came to the bedside, and
 said:—

“Thou know'st me, Peran-Wisa! it is I.
 The sun is not yet risen, and the foe
 Sleep; but I sleep not; all night long
 I lie

Tossing and wakeful, and I come to thee.
 For so did King Afrasiab bid me seek
 Thy counsel, and to heed thee as thy son,
 In Samarcand, before the army march'd;
 And I will tell thee what my heart
 desires.

Thou know'st if, since from Ader-baijan
 first

I came among the Tartars and bore arms,
 I have still served Afrasiab well, and
 shown.

At my boy's years, the courage of a man.
 This too thou know'st, that while I still
 bear on

The conquering Tartar ensigns through
 the world,

And beat the Persians back on every
 field,

I seek one man, one man, and one alone—
 Rustum, my father; who I hoped should
 greet,

Should one day greet, upon some well-
 fought field,

His not unworthy, not inglorious son.
 So I long hoped, but him I never find.
 Come then, hear now, and grant me
 what I ask.

Let the two armies rest to-day; but I
 Will challenge forth the bravest Per-
 sian lords

To meet me, man to man; if I prevail,
 Rustum will surely hear it: if I fall—
 Old man, the dead need no one, claim no
 kin.

Dim is the rumor of a common fight,
 Where host meets host, and many names
 are sunk;

But of a single combat fame speaks
 clear.”

He spoke; and Peran-Wisa took the
 hand

Of the young man in his, and sigh'd, and
 said:—

“O Sohrab, an unquiet heart is
 thine!

Canst thou not rest among the Tartar
 chiefs,
 And share the battle's common chance
 with us
 Who love thee, but must press for ever
 first,
 In single fight incurring single risk,
 To find a father thou hast never seen?
 That were far best, my son, to stay with
 us
 Unmurmuring; in our tents, while it is
 war,
 And when 't is truce, then in Afrasiab's
 towns.
 But, if this one desire indeed rules all,
 To seek out Rustum—seek him not
 through fight!
 Seek him in peace, and carry to his
 arms,
 O Sohrab, carry an unwounded son!
 But far hence seek him, for he is not
 here,
 For now it is not as when I was young,
 When Rustum was in front of every
 fray;
 But now he keeps apart, and sits at
 home,
 In Seistan, with Zal, his father old.
 Whether that his own mighty strength
 at last
 Feels the abhorr'd approaches of old age,
 Or in some quarrel with the Persian
 King.
 There go!—Thou wilt not? Yet my
 heart forebodes
 Danger or death awaits thee on this
 field.
 Fain would I know thee safe and well,
 though lost
 To us; fain therefore send thee hence,
 in peace
 To seek thy father, not seek single
 fights
 In vain;—but who can keep the lion's
 cub
 From ravening, and who govern Rus-
 tum's son?
 Go, I will grant thee what thy heart
 desires."
 So said he, and dropp'd Sohrab's hand,
 and left
 His bed, and the warm rugs whereon he
 lay;
 And o'er his chilly limbs his woollen
 coat
 He pass'd, and tied his sandals on his
 feet,
 And threw a white cloak round him, and
 he took

In his right hand a ruler's staff, no
 sword;
 And on his head he set his sheep-skin
 cap,
 Black, glossy, curl'd, the fleece of Kara-
 Kul;
 And raised the curtain of his tent, and
 call'd
 His herald to his side, and went abroad.
 The sun by this had risen, and clear'd
 the fog
 From the broad Oxus and the glittering
 sands.
 And from their tents the Tartar horse-
 men filed
 Into the open plain; so Haman bade—
 Haman, who next to Peran-Wisa ruled
 The host, and still was in his lusty
 prime.
 From their black tents, long files of
 horse, they stream'd;
 As when some gray November morn the
 files,
 In marching orderspread, of long-neck'd
 cranes
 Stream over Casbin and the southern
 slopes
 Of Elburz, from the Aralian estuaries,
 Or some froze Caspian reed-bed, south-
 ward bound
 For the warm Persian sea-board—so they
 stream'd.
 The Tartars of the Oxus, the King's
 guard,
 First, with black sheep-skin caps and
 with long spears;
 Large men, large steeds; who from Bok-
 hara come
 And Khiva, and ferment the milk of
 mares.
 Next, the more temperate Toorkmuns of
 the south,
 The Tukas, and the lances of Salore,
 And those from Attruck and the Cas-
 pian sands;
 Light men and on light steeds, who only
 drink
 The acrid milk of camels, and their
 wells.
 And then a swarm of wandering horse,
 who came
 From far, and a more doubtful service
 own'd;
 The Tartars of Ferghana, from the
 banks
 Of the Jaxartes, men with scanty beards
 And close-set skull-caps; and those
 wilder hordes [ern waste,
 Who roam o'er Kipchak and the north-

Kalmucks and unkempt Kuzzaks, tribes
 who stray
 Nearest the Pole, and wandering Kir-
 ghizzes,
 Who come on shaggy ponies from Pa-
 mere;
 These all filed out from camp into the
 plain.
 And on the other side the Persians
 form'd ;—
 First a light cloud of horse, Tartars they
 seem'd,
 The Ilyats of Khorassan ; and behind,
 The royal troops of Persia, horse and
 foot,
 Marshall'd battalions bright in burnish'd
 steel.
 But Peran-Wisa with his herald came,
 Threading the Tartar squadrons to the
 front,
 And with his staff kept back the fore-
 most ranks.
 And when Ferood, who led the Persians,
 saw
 That Peran-Wisa kept the Tartars back,
 He took his spear, and to the front he
 came,
 And check'd his ranks, and fix'd them
 where they stood.
 And the old Tartar came upon the sand
 Betwixt the silent hosts, and spake, and
 said :
 " Ferood, and ye, Persians and Tartars,
 hear !
 Let there be truce between the hosts to-
 day.
 But choose a champion from the Persian
 lords
 To fight our champion Sohrab, man to
 man."
 As, in the country, on a morn in June,
 When the dew glistens on the pearled
 ears,
 A shiver runs through the deep corn for
 joy—
 So, when they heard what Peran-Wisa
 said,
 A thrill through all the Tartar squad-
 rons ran
 Of pride and hope for Sohrab, whom
 they loved.
 But as a troop of pedlars, from Ca-
 bool,
 Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,
 That vast sky neighboring mountain of
 milk snow ;
 Crossing so high, that, as they mount,
 they pass [the snow,
 Long flocks of travelling birds dead on

Choked by the air, and scarce can they
 themselves
 Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd
 mulberries—
 In single file they move, and stop their
 breath,
 For fear they should dislodge the o'er-
 hanging snows—
 So the pale Persians held their breath
 with fear.
 And to Ferood his brother chiefs came
 up
 To counsel : Gudurz and Zoarrah came,
 And Feraburz, who ruled the Persian
 host
 Second, and was the uncle of the King ;
 These came and counsell'd, and then
 Gudurz said :—
 " Ferood, shame bids us take their
 challenge up,
 Yet champion have we none to match
 this youth.
 He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's
 heart ;
 But Rustum came last night ; aloof he
 sits
 And sullen, and has pitch'd his tents
 apart.
 Him will I seek, and carry to his ear
 The Tartar challenge, and this young
 man's name.
 Haply he will forget his wrath, and fight,
 Stand forth the while, and take their
 challenge up."
 So spake he ; and Ferood stood forth
 and cried :—
 " Old man, be it agreed as thou hast
 said !
 Let Sohrab arm, and we will find a
 man."
 He spake : and Peran-Wisa turn'd,
 and strode
 Back through the opening squadrons to
 his tent.
 But through the anxious Persians Gud-
 urz ran,
 And cross'd the camp which lay behind,
 and reach'd,
 Out on the sands beyond it, Rustum's
 tents.
 Of scarlet cloth they were, and glitter-
 ing gay,
 Just pitch'd ; the high pavilion in the
 midst
 Was Rustum's, and his men lay camp'd
 around.
 And Gudurz enter'd Rustum's tent, and
 found [but still
 Rustum ; his morning meal was done,

The table stood before him, charged
with food—

A side of roasted sheep, and cakes of
bread,

And dark green melons ; and there Rustum
sate

Listless, and held a falcon on his wrist,
And play'd with it ; but Gudurz came
and stood

Before him ; and he look'd, and saw him
stand,

And with a cry sprang up and dropp'd
the bird.

And greeted Gudurz with both hands,
and said :—

“ Welcome ! these eyes could see no
better sight.

What news ? but sit down first, and eat
and drink.”

But Gudurz stood in the tent door,
and said :—

“ Not now ! a time will come to eat and
drink,

But not to-day ; to-day has other needs.
The armies are drawn out, and stand at
gaze ;

For from the Tartars is a challenge
brought

To pick a champion from the Persian
lords

To fight their champion—and thou
know'st his name—

Sohrab men call him, but his birth is
hid.

O Rustum, like thy might is this young
man's !

He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's
heart ;

And he is young, and Iran's chiefs are
old,

Or else too weak ; and all eyes turn to
thee.

Come down and help us, Rustum, or we
lose !”

He spoke ; but Rustum answer'd with
a smile :—

Go to ! if Iran's chiefs are old, then I
Am older ; if the young are weak, the

King

Errs strangely ; for the King, for Kai
Khosroo,

Himself is young, and honors younger
men,

And lets the aged moulder to their
graves.

Rustum he loves no more, but loves the
young—

The young may rise at Sohrab's vaunts,
not I.

For what care I, though all speak
Sohrab's fame ?

For would that I myself had such a son,
And not that one slight helpless girl I
have—

A son so famed, so brave, to send to war,
And I to tarry with the snow-hair'd Zal,
My father, whom the robber Afghans
vex,

And clip his borders short, and drive
his herds,

And he has none to guard his weak old
age.

There would I go, and hang my armor
up,

And with my great name fence that
weak old man,

And spend the goodly treasures I have
got,

And rest my age, and hear of Sohrab's
fame,

And leave to death the hosts of thank-
less kins,

And with these slaughterous hands draw
sword no more.”

He spoke and smiled ; and Gudurz
made reply :—

“ What then, O Rustum, will men
say to this,

When Sohrab dares our bravest forth,
and seeks

Thee most of all, and thou, whom most
he seeks,

Hidest thy face ? Take heed lest men
should say :

*Like some old miser, Rustum hoards his
fame,*

And shuns to peril it with younger men.”

And greatly moved, then Rustum
made reply :—

“ O Gudurz, wherefore dost thou say
such words ?

Thou knowest better words than this to
say.

What is one more, one less, obscure or
famed,

Valiant or craven, young or old, to me ?
Are not they mortal, am not I myself ?

But who for men of nought would do
great deeds ?

Come, thou shalt see how Rustum
hoards his fame !

But I will fight unknown, and in plain
arms ;

Let not men say of Rustum, he was
match'd

In single fight with any mortal man.”

He spoke, and frown'd ; and Gudurz
turn'd, and ran

Back quickly through the camp in fear
 and joy—
 Fear at his wrath, but joy that Rustum
 came.
 But Rustum strode to his tent-door, and
 call'd
 His followers in, and bade them bring
 his arms,
 And clad himself in steel; the arms he
 chose
 Were plain, and on his shield was no
 device,
 Only his helm was rich, inlaid with gold,
 And, from the fluted spine atop, a plume
 Of horsehair waved, a scarlet horsehair
 plume.
 So arm'd, he issued forth; and Ruksh,
 his horse,
 Follow'd him like a faithful hound at
 heel—
 Ruksh, whose renown was noised
 through all the earth,
 The horse, whom Rustum on a foray
 once
 Did in Bokhara by the river find
 A colt beneath its dam, and drove him
 home,
 And rear'd him; a bright bay, with
 lofty crest,
 Dight with a saddle-cloth of broider'd
 green
 Crusted with gold, and on the ground
 were work'd
 All beasts of chase, all beasts which
 hunters know.
 So follow'd, Rustum left his tents, and
 cross'd
 The camp, and to the Persian host ap-
 pear'd.
 And all the Persians knew him, and
 with shouts
 Hail'd; but the Tartars knew not who
 he was.
 And dear as the wet diver to the eyes
 Of his pale wife who waits and weeps
 on shore,
 By sandy Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf,
 Plunging all day in the blue waves, at
 night,
 Having made up his tale of precious
 pearls,
 Rejoins her in their hut upon the sands—
 So dear to the pale Persians Rustum
 came.
 And Rustum to the Persian front ad-
 vanced,
 And Sohrab arm'd in Haman's tent, and
 came.
 And as afield the reapers cut a swath

Down through the middle of a rich
 man's corn,
 And on each side are squares of stand-
 ing corn,
 And in the midst a stubble, short and
 bare—
 So on each side were squares of men,
 with spears
 Bristling, and in the midst, the open
 sand.
 And Rustum came upon the sand, and
 cast
 His eyes toward the Tartar tents, and
 saw
 Sohrab come forth, and eyed him as he
 came.
 As some rich woman, on a winter's
 morn,
 Eyes through her silken curtains the
 poor drudge
 Who with numb blacken'd fingers makes
 her fire—
 At cock-crow, on a starlit winter's morn,
 When the frost flowers the whiten'd
 window-panes—
 And wonders how she lives, and what
 the thoughts
 Of that poor drudge may be; so Rus-
 tum eyed
 The unknown adventurous youth, who
 from afar
 Came seeking Rustum, and defying forth
 All the most valiant chiefs; long he
 perused
 His spirited air, and wonder'd who he
 was.
 For very young he seem'd, tenderly
 rear'd;
 Like some young cypress, tall, and dark,
 and straight,
 Which in a queen's secluded garden
 throws
 Its slight dark shadow on the moonlit
 turf,
 By midnight, to a bubbling fountain's
 sound—
 So slender Sohrab seem'd, so softly
 rear'd.
 And a deep pity enter'd Rustum's soul
 As he beheld him coming; and he stood,
 And beckon'd to him with his hand, and
 said:—
 "O thou young man, the air of Heaven
 is soft,
 And warm, and pleasant; but the grave
 is cold!
 Heaven's air is better than the cold dead
 grave.
 Behold me! I am vast, and clad in iron,

And tried ; and I have stood on many a field

Of blood, and I have fought with many a foe—

Never was that field lost, or that foe saved.

O Sohrab, wherefore wilt thou rush on death ?

Be govern'd ! quit the Tartar host, and come

To Iran, and be as my son to me,
And fight beneath my banner till I die !
There are no youths in Iran brave as thou."

So he spake, mildly ; Sohrab heard his voice,

The mighty voice of Rustum, and he saw
His giant figure planted on the sand,
Sole, like some single tower, which a chief

Hath builded on the waste in former years

Against the robbers ; and he saw that head,

Streak'd with its first gray hairs ;—hope filled his soul,

And he ran forward and embraced his knees,

And clasp'd his hand within his own, 'and said :—

"O, by thy father's head ! by thine own soul !

Art thou not Rustum ? speak ! art thou not he ?"

But Rustum eyed askance the kneeling youth,

And turn'd away, and spake to his own soul :—

"Ah me, I muse what this young fox may mean !

False, wily, boastful, are these Tartar boys.

For if I now confess this thing he asks,
And hide it not, but say : *Rustum is here !*

He will not yield indeed, nor quit our foes,

But he will find some pretext not to fight,
And praise my fame, and proffer court-
eous gifts

A belt or sword perhaps, and go his way.
And on a feast-tide, in Afrasiab's hall,

In Samarcand, he will arise and cry :
'I challenged once, when the two

armies camp'd

Beside the Oxus, all the Persian lords
To cope with me in single fight ; but they

Shrank, only Rustum dared ; then he and I [away.]

Changed gifts. and went on equal terms

So will he speak, perhaps, while men applaud ;

Then were the chiefs of Iran shamed through me."

And then he turn'd, and sternly spake aloud :—

"Rise ! wherefore dost thou vainly question thus

Of Rustum ? I am here, whom thou hast call'd

By challenge forth ; make good thy vaunt, or yield !

Is it with Rustum only thou wouldst fight ?

Rash boy, men look on Rustum's face and flee !

For well I know, that did great Rustum stand

Before thy face this day, and were reveal'd,

There would be then no talk of fighting more.

But being what I am, I tell thee this—
Do thou record it in thine inmost soul :

Either thou shalt renounce thy vaunt and yield,

Or else thy bones shall strew this sand, till winds

Bleach them, or Oxus with his summer-floods,

Oxus in summer wash them all away."

He spoke ; and Sohrab answer'd, on his feet :—

"Art thou so fierce ? Thou wilt not fright me so !

I am no girl, to be made pale by words.
Yet this thou hast said well, did Rustum stand

Here on this field, there were no fighting then.

But Rustum is far hence, and we stand here.

Begin ! thou art more vast, more dread than I,

And thou art proved, I know, and I am young—

But yet success sways with the breath of Heaven.

And though thou thinkest that thou knowest sure [know.

Thy victory, yet thou canst not surely
For we are all, like swimmers in the sea,

Poised on the top of a huge wave of fate,
Which hangs uncertain to which side to fall.

And whether it will heave us up to land,
Or whether it will roll us out to sea,

Back out to sea, to the deep waves of death,

We know not, and no search will make
 us know ;
 Only the event will teach us in its hour."
 He spoke, and Rustum answer'd not,
 but hurl'd
 His spear ; down from the shoulder,
 down it came,
 As on some partridge in the corn a hawk,
 That long has tower'd in the airy clouds,
 Drops like a plummet ; Sohrab saw it
 come,
 And sprang aside, quick as a flash ; the
 spear
 Hiss'd, and went quivering down into the
 sand,
 Which it sent flying wide ;—then Sohrab
 threw
 In turn, and full struck Rustum's shield ;
 sharp rang,
 The iron plates rang sharp, but turn'd
 the spear.
 And Rustum seized his club, which none
 but he
 Could wield ; an unlopp'd trunk it was,
 and huge,
 Still rough—like those which men in
 treeless plains
 To build them boats fish from the flooded
 rivers,
 Hyphasis or Hydaspes, when, high up
 By their dark springs, the wind in
 winter-time
 Hath made in Himalayan forests wrack,
 And strewn the channels with torn
 boughs—so huge
 The club which Rustum lifted now, and
 struck
 One stroke ; but again Sohrab sprang
 aside,
 Lithe as the glancing snake, and the
 club came
 Thundering to earth, and leapt from
 Rustum's hand.
 And Rustum follow'd his own blow, and
 fell
 To his knees, and with his fingers
 clutch'd the sand ;
 And now might Sohrab have unsheathed
 his sword,
 And pierced the mighty Rustum while
 he lay
 Dizzy, and on his knees, and choked
 with sand ;
 But he look'd on, and smiled, nor bared
 his sword,
 But courteously drew back, and spoke,
 and said :—
 "Thou strik'st too hard ! that club of
 thine will float

Upon the summer-floods, and not my
 bones.
 But rise, and be not wroth ! not wroth
 am I ;
 No, when I see thee, wrath forsakes my
 soul.
 Thou say'st, thou art not Rustum ; be it
 so !
 Who art thou then, that canst so touch
 my soul ?
 Boy as I am, I have seen battles too—
 Have waded foremost in their bloody
 waves,
 And heard their hollow roar of dying
 men ;
 But never was my heart thus touch'd
 before.
 Are they from Heaven, these softenings
 of the heart ?
 O thou old warrior, let us yield to
 Heaven !
 Come, plant we here in earth our angry
 spears,
 And make a truce, and sit upon this
 sand,
 And pledge each other in red wine, like
 friends,
 And thou shalt talk to me of Rustum's
 deeds.
 There are enough foes in the Persian
 host,
 Whom I may meet, and strike, and feel
 no pang ;
 Champions enough Afrasiab has, whom
 thou
 Mayst fight ; fight *them*, when they con-
 front thy spear !
 But oh, let there be peace 'twixt thee
 and me !"
 He ceased, but while he spake, Rus-
 tum had risen,
 And stood erect, trembling with rage ;
 his club
 He left to lie, but had regain'd his spear,
 Whose fiery point now in his mail'd
 right-hand
 Blazed bright and baleful, like that
 autumn-star,
 The baleful sign of fevers ; dust had soil'd
 His stately crest, and dimm'd his glit-
 tering arms.
 His breast heaved, his lips foam'd, and
 twice his voice
 Was choked with rage ; at last these
 words broke way :—
 "Girl ! nimble with thy feet, not with
 thy hands !
 Curl'd minion, dancer, coiner of sweet
 words !

Fight, let me hear thy hateful voice no more!

Thou art not in Afrasiab's gardens now
With Tartar girls, with whom thou art
wont to dance;

But on the Oxus-sands, and in the dance
Of battle, and with me, who make no
play

Of war; I fight it out, and hand to hand.
Speak not to me of truce, and pledge,
and wine!

Remember all thy valor; try thy feints
And cunning! all the pity I had is gone;
Because thou hast shamed me before
both the hosts

With thy light skipping tricks, and thy
girl's wiles."

He spoke, and Sohrab kindled at his
taunts,

And he too drew his sword; at once
they rush'd

Together, as two eagles on one prey
Come rushing down together from the
clouds,

One from the east, one from the west;
their shields

Dash'd with a clang together, and a din
Rose, such as that the sinewy wood-
cutters

Make often in the forest's heart at morn,
Of hewing axes, crashing trees—such
blows

Rustum and Sohrab on each other hail'd.
And you would say that sun and stars
took part

In that unnatural conflict; for a cloud
Grew suddenly in Heaven, and dark'd
the sun

Over the fighters' heads; and a wind
rose

Under their feet, and moaning swept
the plain,

And in a sandy whirlwind wrapp'd the
pair.

In gloom they twain were wrapp'd, and
they alone;

For both the on-looking hosts on either
hand

Stood in broad daylight, and the sky
was pure,

And the sun sparkled on the Oxus stream.
But in the gloom they fought, with
bloodshot eyes

And laboring breath; first Rustum
struck the shield

Which Sohrab held stiff out; the steel-
spiked spear

Rent the tough plates, but fail'd to reach
the skin,

And Rustum pluck'd it back with an-
gry groan.

Then Sohrab with his sword smote Rus-
tum's helm,

Nor clove its steel quite through; but
all the crest

He shore away, and that proud horse-
hair plume,

Never till now defiled, sank to the dust;
And Rustum bow'd his head; but then
the gloom

Grew blacker, thunder rumbled in the
air,

And lightnings rent the cloud; and
Ruksh, the horse,

Who stood at hand, utter'd a dreadful
cry;—

No horse's cry was that, most like the
roar

Of some pain'd desert-lion, who all day
Hath trail'd the hunter's javelin in his
side,

And comes at night to die upon the
sand.

The two hosts heard that cry, and
quaked for fear,

And Oxus curdled as it cross'd his
stream.

But Sohrab heard, and quail'd not, but
rush'd on,

And struck again; and again Rustum
bow'd

His head; but this time all the blade,
like glass,

Sprang in a thousand shivers on the
helm,

And in the hand the hilt remain'd alone.
Then Rustum raised his head; his dread-
ful eyes

Glared, and he shook on high his menac-
ing spear,

And shouted: *Rustum!*—Sohrab heard
that shout,

And shrank amazed; back he recoil'd
one step,

And scann'd with blinking eyes the ad-
vancing form;

And then he stood bewilder'd; and he
dropp'd

His covering shield, and the spear
pierced his side.

He reel'd, and staggering back, sank to
the ground,

And then the gloom dispersed, and the
wind fell.

And the bright sun broke forth, and
melted all

The cloud; and the two armies saw the
pair—

Saw Rustum standing, safe upon his
feet,
And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody
sand.
Then, with a bitter smile, Rustum
began :—
“Sohrab, thou thoughtest in thy mind
to kill
A Persian lord this day, and strip his
corpse,
And bear thy trophies to Afrasiab's tent.
Or else that the great Rustum would
come down
Himself to fight, and that thy wiles
would move
His heart to take a gift, and let thee go.
And then that all the Tartar host would
praise
Thy courage or thy craft, and spread
thy fame,
To glad thy father in his weak old age.
Fool, thou art slain, and by an unknown
man !
Dearer to the red jackals shalt thou be
Than to thy friends, and to thy father
old.”
And, with a fearless mien, Sohrab re-
plied :—
“Unknown thou art ; yet thy fierce
vaunt is vain.
Thou dost not slay me, proud and boast-
ful man !
No ! Rustum slays me, and this filial
heart.
For were I match'd with ten such men
as thee,
And I were that which till to-day I was,
They should be lying here, I standing
there.
But that belovéd name unnerved my
arm—
That name, and something, I confess, in
thee.
Which troubles all my heart, and made
my shield
Fall ; and thy spear transfix'd an un-
arm'd foe.
And now thou boastest, and insult'st my
fate.
But hear thou this, fierce man, tremble
to hear
The mighty Rustum shall avenge my
death !
My father, whom I seek through all the
world,
He shall avenge my death, and punish
thee !”
As when some hunter in the spring
bath found

A breeding eagle sitting on her nest,
Upon the craggy isle of a hill-lake,
And pierced her with an arrow as she
rose,
And follow'd her to find her where she
fell
Far off ;—anon her mate comes winging
back
From hunting, and a great way off de-
scries
His huddling young left sole ; at that,
he checks
His pinion, and with short uneasy
sweeps
Circles above his eyry, with loud screams
Chiding his mate back to her nest ; but
she
Lies dying, with the arrow in her side,
In some far stony gorge out of his ken,
A heap of fluttering feathers—never
more
Shall the lake glass her, flying over it ;
Never the black and dripping precipices
Echo her stormy scream as she sails by—
As that poor bird flies home, nor knows
his loss,
So Rustum knew not his own loss, but
stood
Over his dying son, and knew him not.
But, with a cold incredulous voice, he
said :—
“What prate is this of fathers and re-
venge ?
The mighty Rustum never had a son.”
And, with a failing voice, Sohrab re-
plied :—
“Ah yes, he had ! and that lost son am I.
Surely the news will one day reach his
ear,
Reach Rustum, where he sits, and tar-
ries long,
Somewhere, I know not where, but far
from here
And pierce him like a stab, and make
him leap
To arms, and cry for vengeance upon
thee.
Fierce man, bethink thee, for an only
son !
What will that grief, what will that
vengeance be ?
Oh, could I live, till I that grief had
seen !
Yet him I pity not so much, but her,
My mother, who in Ader-baijan dwells
With that old king, her father, who
grows gray
With age, and rules over the valiant
Koords.

Her most I pity, who no more will see
Sohrab returning from the Tartar camp,
With spoils and honor, when the war is
done.

But a dark rumor will be bruited up,
From tribe to tribe, until it reach her
ear;

And then will that defenceless woman
learn

That Sohrab will rejoice her sight no
more,

But that in battle with a nameless foe,
By the far-distant Oxus, he is slain."

He spoke; and as he ceased, he wept
aloud,

Thinking of her he left, and his own
death.

He spoke; but Rustum listen'd, plunged
in thought.

Nor did he yet believe it was his son

Who spoke, although he call'd back
names he knew;

For he had had sure tidings that the
babe,

Which was in Ader-baijan born to him,
Had been a puny girl, no boy at all—
So that sad mother sent him word, for
fear

Rustum should seek the boy, to train in
arms

And so he deem'd that either Sohrab
took,

By a false boast, the style of Rustum's
son;

Or that men gave it him, to swell his
fame.

So deem'd he; yet he listen'd, plunged
in thought

And his soul set to grief, as the vast tide
Of the bright rocking Ocean sets to
shore

At the full moon; tears gather'd in his
eyes;

For he remember'd his own early youth,
And all its bounding rapture; as, at
dawn,

The shepherd from his mountain-lodge
descries

A far, bright city, smitten by the sun,
Through many rolling clouds—so Rus-
tum saw

His youth; saw Sohrab's mother, in her
bloom;

And that old king her father, who loved
well

His wandering guest, and gave him his
fair child

With joy; and all the pleasant life they
led,

They three, in that long-distant summer-
time--

The castle, and the dewy woods, and
hunt

And hound, and morn on those delight-
ful hills

In Ader-baijan. And he saw that Youth,
Of age and looks to be his own dear
son,

Piteous and lovely, lying on the sand,
Like some rich hyacinth which by the
scythle

Of an unskilful gardener has been cut,
Mowing the garden grass-plots near its
bed,

And lies, a fragrant tower of purple
bloom,

On the mown, dying grass—so Sohrab
lay,

Lovely in death, upon the common sand.
And Rustum gazed on him with grief,
and said:—

"O Sohrab, thou indeed art such a son
Whom Rustum, wert thou his, might
well have loved.

Yet here thou errest, Sohrab, or else men
Have told thee false—thou art not Rus-
tum's son.

For Rustum had no son; one child he
had—

But one—a girl; who with her mother
now

Plies some light female task, nor dreams
of us--

Of us she dreams not, nor of wounds,
nor war."

But Sohrab answer'd him in wrath;
for now

The anguish of the deep-fix'd spear grew
fierce,

And he desired to draw forth the steel,
And let the blood flow free, and so to
die—

But first he would convince his stubborn
foe;

And, rising sternly on one arm, he
said:—

"Man, who art thou who dost deny
my words?

Truth sits upon the lips of dying men,
And falsehood, while I lived, was far
from mine.

I tell thee, prick'd upon this arm I bear
That seal which Rustum to my mother
gave,

That she might prick it on the babe she
bore."

He spoke; and all the blood left Rus-
tum's cheeks,

And his knees totter'd, and he smote his hand
 Against his breast, his heavy mailed hand,
 That the hard iron corslet clank'd aloud ;
 And to his heart he press'd the other hand,
 And in a hollow voice he spake, and said :—

“Sohrab, that were a proof which could not lie !
 If thou show this, then art thou Rustum's son.”

Then, with weak hasty fingers, Sohrab loosed
 His belt, and near the shoulder bared his arm,
 And show'd a sign in faint vermilion points
 Prick'd ; as a cunning workman, in Pekin,
 Pricks with vermilion some clear porcelain vase,
 An emperor's gift—at early morn he paints,
 And all day long, and, when night comes, the lamp
 Lights up his studious forehead and thin hands—
 So delicately prick'd the sign appear'd
 On Sohrab's arm, the sign of Rustum's seal.
 It was that griffin, which of old rear'd Zal,
 Rustum's great father, whom they left to die,
 A helpless babe, among the mountain-rocks ;
 Him that kind creature found, and rear'd, and loved—
 Then Rustum took it for his glorious sign.
 And Sohrab bared that image on his arm,
 And himself scann'd it long with mournful eyes,
 And then he touch'd it with his hand and said :—

“How say'st thou ? Is that sign the proper sign
 Of Rustum's son, or of some other man's ?”

He spoke ; but Rustum gazed, and gazed, and stood
 Speechless ; and then he utter'd one sharp cry :

O boy—thy father !—and his voice choked there,
 And then a dark cloud pass'd before his

And his head swam, and he sank down to earth.

But Sohrab crawl'd to where he lay, and cast

His arms about his neck, and kiss'd his lips,

And with fond faltering fingers stroked his cheeks,

Trying to call him back to life ; and life Came back to Rustum, and he oped his eyes,

And they stood wide with horror ; and he seized

In both his hands the dust which lay around,

And threw it on his head, and smirch'd his hair.—

His hair, and face, and beard, and glittering arms ;

And strong convulsive groanings shook his breast,

And his sobs choked him ; and he clutch'd his sword.

To draw it, and for ever let life out.

But Sohrab saw his thought, and held his hands,

And with a soothing voice he spake, and said :—

“Father, forbear ! for I but meet to-day

The doom which at my birth was written down

In Heaven, and thou art Heaven's unconscious hand.

Surely my heart cried out that it was thou,

When first I saw thee ; and thy heart spoke too.

I know it ! but fate trod those promptings down

Under its iron heel ; fate, fate engaged The strife, and hurl'd me on my father's spear.

But let us speak no more of this ! I find My father ; let me feel that I have found !

Come, sit beside me on this sand, and take

My head betwixt thy hands, and kiss my cheeks,

And wash them with thy tears, and say :
My son !

Quick ! quick ! for number'd are my sands of life,

And swift ; for like the lightning to this field

I came, and like the wind I go away—

Sudden, and swift, and like a passing wind.

But it was writ in Heaven that this
should be."

So said he, and his voice released the
heart

Of Rustum, and his tears broke forth ;
he cast

His arms round his son's neck, and wept
aloud,

And kiss'd him. And awe fell on both
the hosts,

When they saw Rustum's grief ; and
Ruksh, the horse,

With his head bowing to the ground
and mane

Sweeping the dust, came near, and in
mute woe

First to the one, then to the other moved
His head, as if inquiring what their
grief

Might mean ; and from his dark, com-
passionate eyes,

The big warm tears roll'd down, and
caked the sand.

But Rustum chid him with stern voice,
and said :—

" Ruksh, now thou grievest ; but, O
Ruksh ; thy feet

Should first have rotted on their nimble
joints,

Or ere they brought thy master to this
field !"

But Sohrab look'd upon the horse and
said ;—

" Is this, then, Ruksh ? How often, in
past days,

My mother told me of thee, thou brave
steed,

My terrible father's terrible horse ! and
said,

That I should one day find thy lord and
thee.

Come, let me lay my hand upon thy
mane !

O Ruksh, thou art more fortunate than I ;
For thou hast gone where I shall never

go,
And snuff'd the breezes of my father's
home,

And thou hast trod the sands of Seis-
tan,

And seen the River of Helmund, and the
Lake

Of Zirrah ; and the aged Zal himself
Has often stroked thy neck, and given

thee food,
Corn in a golden platter soak'd with
wine,

And said ; *O Ruksh ! bear Rustum well !*
—but I

Have never known my grandsire's fur-
row'd face,

Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan,
Nor slaked my thirst at the clear Hel-
mund stream ;

But lodged among my father's foes, and
seen

Afrasiab's cities only, Samarcand,
Bokhara, and lone Khiva in the waste,

And the black Toorkmun tents ; and
only drunk

The desert rivers, Moorghab and Tejend,
Kohik, and where the Kalmuks feed

their sheep,

The northern Sir ; and this great Oxus
stream,

The yellow Oxus, by whose brink I die,"
Then, with a heavy groan. Rustum be-
wail'd :—

" Oh, that its waves were flowing over
me !

Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt
Roll tumbling in the current o'er my
head !"

But, with a grave mild voice, Sohrab
replied :—

" Desire not that, my father ! thou must
live.

For some are born to do great deeds, and
live,

As some are born to be obscured, and
die.

Do thou the deeds I die too young to do,
And reap a second glory in thine age ;

Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine.
But come ! thou seest this great host of
men

Which follow me ; I pray thee, slay
not these !

Let me entreat for them ; what have
they done ?

They follow'd me, my hope, my fame,
my star.

Let them all cross the Oxus back in
peace.

But me thou must bear hence, not send
with them,

But carry me with thee to Seistan,
And place me on a bed, and mourn for
me,

Thou, and the snow-hair'd Zal, and all
thy friends,

And thou must lay me in that lovely
earth.

And heap a stately mound above my
bones,

And plant a far-seen pillar over all.
That so the passing horseman on the
waste

May see my tomb a great way off, and
cry :

*Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies
there,*

*Whom his great father did in ignorance
kill !*

And I be not forgotten in my grave."

And, with a mournful voice, Rustum
replied :—

"Fear not, as thou hast said, Sohrab,
my son,

So shall it be ; for I will burn my tents,
And quit the host, and bear thee hence
with me,

And carry thee away to Seistan,
And place thee on a bed, and mourn for
thee,

With the snow-headed Zal, and all my
friends,

And I will lay thee in that lovely earth,
And heap a stately mound above thy
bones,

And plant a far-seen pillar over all,
And men shall not forget thee in thy
grave.

And I will spare thy host ; yea, let
them go !

Let them all cross the Oxus back in
peace !

What should I do with slaying any
more ?

For would that all that I have ever
slain

Might be once more alive ; my bitterest
foes,

And they who were call'd champions in
their time,

And through whose death I won that
fame I have—

And I were nothing but a common man,
A poor, mean soldier, and without re-
nown,

So thou mightest live too, my son, my
son !

Or rather would that I, even I myself,
Might now be lying on this bloody sand,
Near death, and by an ignorant stroke
of thine,

Not thou of mine ! and I might die, not
thou ;

And I, not thou, be borne to Seistan ;
And Zal might weep above my grave,
not thine ;

And say : *O son I weep thee not too sore,
For willingly, I know, thou met'st thine
end !*

But now in blood and battles was my
youth,

And full of blood and battles is my age,

And I shall never end this life of blood."

Then, at the point of death, Sohrab
replied :—

"A life of blood indeed, thou dreadful
man !

But thou shalt yet have peace ; only not
now,

Not yet ! but thou shalt have it on that
day,

When thou shalt sail in a high-masted
ship,

Thou and the other peers of Kai Khos-
roo,

Returning home over the salt blue sea,
From laying thy dear master in his
grave."

And Rustum gazed in Sohrab's face,
and said :—

"Soon be that day, my son, and deep
that sea !

Till then, if fate so wills, let me endure."
He spoke ; and Sohrab smiled on him,

and took
The spear, and drew it from his side, and
eased

His wound's imperious anguish ; but the
blood

Came welling from the open gash, and
life

Flow'd with the stream ;—all down his
cold white side

The crimson torrent ran, dim now and
soil'd,

Like the soil'd tissue of white violets
Left, freshly gather'd, on the native
bank,

By children whom their nurses call with
haste

Indoors from the sun's eye ; his head
droop'd low,

His limbs grew slack ; motionless, white,
he lay—

White, with eyes closed ; only when
heavy gasps,

Deep heavy gasps quivering through all
his frame,

Convulsed him back to life, he open'd
them.

And fix'd them feebly on his father's
face ;

Till now all strength was ebb'd, and
from his limbs,

Unwillingly the spirit fled away,
Regretting the warm mansion which it
left.

And youth, and bloom, and this delight-
ful world.

So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay
dead ;

And the great Rustum drew his horse-
man's cloak
Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead
son.
As those black granite pillars, once
high-rear'd
By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear
His house, now 'mid their broken flights
of steps
Lie prone, enormous, down the moun-
tain side—
So in the sand lay Rustum by his son.
And night came down over the sol-
emn waste,
And the two gazing hosts, and that sole
pair,
And darken'd all; and a cold fog, with
night,
Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum
arose,
As of a great assembly loosed, and fires
Began to twinkle through the fog; for
now
Both armies moved to camp, and took
their meal;
The Persians took it on the open sands
Southward, the Tartars by the river
marge;
And Rustum and his son were left alone.
But the majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of that low
land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there
moved,
Rejoicing, through the hush'd Choras-
mian waste,
Under the solitary moon;—he flow'd
Right for the polar star, past Orgunjè,
Brimming, and bright, and large; then
sands began
To hem his watery march, and dam his
streams,
And split his currents; that for many a
league
The shorn and parcell'd Oxus strains
along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy
isles—
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain-cradle in Pamere,
A foil'd circuitous wanderer—till at last
The long'd-for dash of waves is heard,
and wide
His luminous home of waters opens,
bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-
bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.

1853.

PHILOMELA

HARK! ah, the nightingale—
The tawny-throated!
Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a
burst!
What triumph! hark!—what pain!

O wanderer from a Grecian shore,
Still, after many years, in distant lands,
Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain
That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken,
old-world pain—
Say, will it never heal?
And can this fragrant lawn
With its cool trees, and night,
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
And moonshine, and the dew,
To thy rack'd heart and brain
Afford no balm?

Dost thou to-night behold,
Here, through the moonlight on this
English grass,
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian
wild?
Dost thou again peruse
With thine cheeks and sear'd eyes
The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's
shame?
Dost thou once more assay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
Poor fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make
resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian
vale?
Listen, Eugenia—
How thick the bursts come crowding
through the leaves!
Again—thou hearest?
Eternal passion!
Eternal pain!

1853.

W THE SCHOLAR-GIPSY

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the
hill;
Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled
cotes!
No longer leave thy wistful flock un-
fed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their
throats,
Nor the cropp'd herbage shoot another
bead.
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to
rest,

And only the white sheep are some-
times seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-
blanch'd green,
Come, shepherd, and again begin the
quest!

Here, where the reaper was at work of
late—
In this high field's dark corner, where he
leaves

His coat, his basket, and his earthen
cruse,
And in the sun all morning binds the
sheaves,

Then here, at noon, comes back his
stores to use—

Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is
borne.

With distant cries of reapers in the
corn—
All the live murmur of a summer's day.

Screen'd is this nook o'er the high, half-
reap'd field,
And here till sun-down, shepherd! will
I be.

Through the thick corn the scarlet
poppies peep,
And round green roots and yellowing
stalks I see

Pale pink convolvulus in tendrils
creep;

And air-swept lindens yield
Their scent, and rustle down their per-
fumed showers

Of bloom on the bent grass where I am
laid,

And bower me from the August sun
with shade;

And the eye travels down to Oxford's
towers.

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's
book—

Come, let me read the oft-read tale
again!

The story of the Oxford scholar poor,
Of pregnant parts and quick inventive
brain,

Who, tired of knocking at prefer-
ment's door,

One summer-morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the gipsy-
lore,

And roam'd the world with that wild
brotherhood,

And came, as most men deem'd, to lit-
tle good.
But came to Oxford and his friends no
more.

But once, years after, in the country-
lanes,
Two scholars, whom at college erst he
knew,

Met him, and of his way of life en-
quired;

Whereat he answer'd, that the gipsy-
crew,

His mates, had arts to rule as they de-
sired

The workings of men's brains,
And they can bind them to what thoughts
they will.

"And I," he said, "the secret of their
art,

When fully learn'd, will to the world
impart;

But it needs heaven-sent moments for
this skill."

This said, he left them, and return'd no
more.—

But rumors hung about the country-
side.

That the lost Scholar long was seen to
stray,

Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and
tongue-tied,

In hat of antique shape, and cloak of
gray,

The same the gipsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in
spring;

At some lone alehouse in the Berk-
shire moors,

On the warm ingle-berich, the smock-
frock'd boors

Had found him seated at their entering,

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he
would fly.

And I myself seem half to know thy
looks,

And put the shepherds, wanderer! on
thy trace;

And boys who in lone wheatfields scare
the rooks

I ask if thou hast pass'd their quiet
place;

Or in my boat I lie
Moor'd to the cool bank in the summer-
heats,

'Mid wide grass meadows which the
sunshine fills,

And watch the warm, green-muffled
Cumner hills,
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy
retreats.

For most, I know, thou lov'st retired
ground!

Thee at the ferry Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer-nights,
have met

Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-
lock-hithe,

Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers
wet,

As the punt's rope chops round;
And leaning backward in a pensive
dream,

And fostering in thy lap a heap of
flowers

Pluck'd in shy fields and distant Wych-
wood bowers,

And thine eyes resting on the moonlit
stream.

And then they land, and thou art seen
no more!—

Maidens, who from the distant hamlets
come

To dance around the Fyfield elm in
May,

Of through the darkening fields have
seen thee roam,

Or cross a stile into the public way.

Of thou hast given them store
Of flowers—the frail-leaf'd, white anem-
one,

Dark bluebells drench'd with dews of
summer eves,

And purple orchises with spotted
leaves—

But none hath words she can report of
thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-
time's here

In June, and many a scythe in sunshine
flames,

Men who through those wide fields of
breezy grass

Where black-wing'd swallows haunt the
glittering Thames,

To bathe in the abandon'd lasher pass,
Have often pass'd thee near

Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown;
Mark'd thine outlandish garb, thy
figure spare,

Thy dark vague eyes, and soft ab-
stracted air— [vast gone!

But, when they came from bathing, thou

At some lone homestead in the Cumner
hills,

Where at her open door the housewife
darns,

Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a
gate

To watch the threshers in the mossy
barns.

Children, who early range these slopes
and late

For cresses from the rills,

Have known thee eying, all an April-
day,

The springing pastures and the feeding
kine;

And mark'd thee, when the stars come
out and shine,

Through the long dewy grass move slow
away.

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley
Wood—

Where most the gipsies by the turf-edged
way

Pitch their smoked tents, and every
bush you see

With scarlet patches tagg'd and shreds
of gray,

Above the forest-ground called Thes-
saly—

The blackbird, picking food,

Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears
at all;

So often has he known thee past him
stray,

Rapt, twirling in thy hand a wither'd
spray,

And waiting for the spark from heaven
to fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway
chill

Where home through flooded fields foot-
travellers go,

Have I not pass'd thee on the wooden
bridge,

Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with
the snow,

Thy face tow'rd Hinksey and its win-
try ridge?

And thou hast climb'd the hill,

And gain'd the white brow of the Cum-
ner range;

Turn'd once to watch, while thick the
snowflakes fall,

The line of festal light in Christ-Church
hall—

Then sought thy straw in some seques-
ter'd grange.

But what—I dream ! Two hundred years
are flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford
halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale in-
scribe
That thou wert wander'd from the stu-
dious walls
To learn strange arts, and join a gipsy-
tribe ;
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard
laid—
Some country-nook, where o'er thy un-
known grave
Tall grasses and white flowering net-
tles wave,
Under a dark, red-fruited yew-tree's
shade.

—No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of
hours !
For what wears out the life of mortal
men ?
'Tis that from change to change their
being rolls ;
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls
And numb the elastic powers.
Till having used our nerves with bliss
and teen,
And tired upon a thousand schemes
our wit,
To the just-pausing Genius we remit
Our worn-out life, and are—what we
have been.

Thou hast not lived, why should'st thou
perish, so ?
Thou hadst *one* aim, *one* business, *one*
desire ;
Else wert thou long since number'd
with the dead !
Else hadst thou spent, like other men,
thy fire !
The generations of thy peers are fled,
And we ourselves shall go ;
But thou possessest an immortal lot,
And we imagine thee exempt from age
And living as thou liv'st on Glanvil's
page,
Because thou hadst—what we, alas !
have not.

For early didst thou leave the world,
with powers
Fresh, undiverted to the world without.
Firm to their mark, not spent on other
things ;

Free from the sick fatigue, the languid
doubt,
Which much to have tried, in much
been baffled, brings.
O life unlike to ours !
Who fluctuate idly without term or
scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for
what he strives,
And each half lives a hundred differ-
ent lives ;
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee,
in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from heaven !
and we,
Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly
will'd,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in
deeds,
Whose vague resolves never have been
fulfill'd ;
For whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments
new ;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won
to-day—
Ah ! do not we, wanderer ! await it too ?

Yes, we await it !—but it still delays,
And then we suffer ! and amongst us one,
Whomost has suffer'd, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne ;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days ;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth
and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was
fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and
how the head,
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest ! and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream
would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try
to bear ;
With close-lipp'd patience for our only
friend,
Sad patience, too near neighbor to
despair—
But none has hope like thine !
Thou through the fields and through the
woods dost stray,
Roaming the country-side, a truant
boy,

Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
And every doubt long blown by time
away.

O born in days when wits were fresh
and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling
Thames;

Before the strange disease of modern
life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertax'd, its palsied hearts,
was rife—

Fly hence, our contact fear!
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering
wood!

Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
From her false friend's approach in
Hades turn,
Wave us away and keep thy solitude!

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free onward impulse brushing
through,
By night, the silver'd branches of the
glade—

Far on the forest-skirts, where none
pursue,

On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales
Freshen thy flowers as in former years
With dew, or listen with enchanted
ears,

From the dark dingles, to the nightfin-
gales!

But fly our paths, our feverish contact
fly!

For strong the infection of our mental
strife.

Which, though it gives no bliss, yet
spoils for rest;

And we should win thee from thy own
fair life,

Like us distracted, and like us unblest.
Soon, soon thy cheer would die,

Thy hopes grow timorous, and unfix'd
thy powers.

And thy clear aims be cross and shift-
ing made;

And then thy glad perennial youth
would fade,

Fade and grow old at last, and die like
ours.

Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and
smiles!

—As some grave Tyrian trader, from the
sea,

Descried at sunrise an emerging prow
Lifting the cool-hair'd creepers stealthily,
The fringes of a southward-facing brow
Among the Ægean Isles;

And saw the merry Grecian coaster come,
Freighted with amber grapes, and
Chian wine,

Green, bursting figs, and tunnies
steep'd in brine—

And knew the intruders on his ancient
home,

The young light-hearted masters of the
waves—

And snatch'd his rudder, and shook out
more sail;

And day and night held on indignantly
O'er the Blue Midland waters with the
gale,

Betwixt the Syrtes and soft Sicily,
To where the Atlantic raves

Outside the western straits; and unbent
sails

There, where down cloudy cliffs,
through sheets of foam,

Shy traffickers, the dark Iberians
come;

And on the beach undid his corded bales.
1853.

FROM BALDER DEAD

SECTION III

THE Gods held talk together, group'd in
knots,

Round Balder's corpse, which they had
thither borne;

And Hermod came down tow'ards them
from the gate.

And Lok, the father of the serpent, first
Beheld him come, and to his neighbor
spake:—

“See, here is Hermod, who comes
single back

From Hell; and shall I tell thee how he
seems?

Like as a farmer, who hath lost his dog,
Some morn, at market, in a crowded
town—

Through many streets the poor beast
runs in vain,

And follows this man after that, for
hours;

And, late at evening, spent and panting,
falls

Before a stranger's threshold, not his
home,

With flanks a-tremble, and his slender
tongue

Hangs quivering out between his dust-smear'd jaws,
And piteously he eyes the passers by ;
But home his master comes to his own farm,

Far in the country, wondering where he is—

So Hermod comes to-day unfollow'd home."

And straight his neighbor, moved with wrath, replied :—

"Deceiver ! fair in form, but false in heart !

Enemy, mocker, whom, though Gods, we hate—

Peace, lest our father Odin hear thee gibe !

Would I might see him snatch thee in his hand,

And bind thy carcase, like a bale, with cords,

And hurl thee in a lake, to sink or swim !
If clear from plotting Balder's death, to swim ;

But deep, if thou devisedst it, to drown,
And perish, against fate, before thy day."

So they two soft to one another spake.
But Odin look'd toward the land, and saw
His messenger ; and he stood forth, and cried.

And Hermod came, and leapt from Sleipner down,

And in his father's hand put Sleipner's rein,

And greeted Odin and the Gods, and said :—

"Odin, my father, and ye, Gods of Heaven !

Lo, home, having perform'd your will, I come.

Into the joyless kingdom have I been,
Below, and look'd upon the shadowy tribes

Of ghosts, and communed with their solemn queen ;

And to your prayer she sends you this reply :

Show her through all the world the signs of grief !

Fails but one thing to grieve, there Balder stops !

Let Gods, men, brutes, bewep him ; plants and stones :

So shall she know your loss was dear indeed,

And bend her heart and give you Balder back."

He spoke ; and all the Gods to Odin look'd :

And straight the Father of the ages said :—

"Ye Gods, these terms may keep another day.

But now, put on your arms, and mount your steeds,

And in procession all come near, and weep

Balder ; for that is what the dead desire.
When ye enough have wept, then build

a pile
Of the heap'd wood, and burn his corpse

with fire
Out of our sight ; that we may turn from grief,

And lead, as erst, our daily life in Heaven."

He spoke, and the Gods arm'd ; and Odin donn'd

His dazzling corslet and his helm of gold,
And led the way on Sleipner ; and the rest

Follow'd, in tears, their father and their king.

And thrice in arms around the dead they rode.

Weeping ; the sands were wetted, and their arms.

With their thick-falling tears—so good a friend

They mourn'd that day, so bright, so loved a God.

And Odin came, and laid his kingly hands

On Balder's breast, and thus began the wail :—

"Farewell, O Balder, bright and loved, my son !

In that great day, the twilight of the Gods,

When Muspel's children shall beleaguer Heaven,

Then we shall miss thy counsel and thy arm."

Thou camest near the next, O warrior Thor !

Shouldering thy hammer, in thy chariot drawn,

Swaying the long-hair'd goats with silver'd rein ;

And over Balder's corpse these words didst say :—

"Brother, thou dwellest in the dark-some land,

And talkest with the feeble tribes of ghosts,

Now, and I know not how they prize thee there— [and mourn'd

But here, I know, thou wilt be miss'd

For haughty spirits and high wraths are
 life

Among the Gods and Heroes here in
 Heaven,

As among those whose joy and work is
 war;

And daily strifes arise, and angry words.
 But from thy lips, O Balder, night or
 day,

Heard no one ever an injurious word
 To God or Hero, but thou kepest back
 The others, laboring to compose their
 brawls.

Be ye then kind, as Balder too was kind!
 For we lose him, who smoothed all strife
 in Heaven."

He spake, and all the Gods assenting
 wail'd.

And Freya next came nigh, with golden
 tears;

The loveliest Goddess she in Heaven, by
 all

Most honor'd after Freya, Odin's wife.

Her long ago the wandering Oder took
 To mate, but left her to roam distant
 lands;

Since then she seeks him, and weeps tears
 of gold.

Names hath she many; Vanadis on
 earth

They call her, Freya is her name in
 Heaven;

She in her hands took Balder's head, and
 spake:—

"Balder, my brother, thou art gone a
 road

Unknown and long, and haply on that
 way

My long-lost wandering Oder thou hast
 met,

For in the paths of Heaven he is not
 found.

Oh, if it be so, tell him what thou wast
 To his neglected wife, and what he is,
 And wring his heart with shame, to hear
 thy word!

For he, my husband, left me here to pine,
 Not long a wife, when his unquiet heart
 First drove him from me into distant
 lands;

Since then I vainly seek him through
 the world,

And weep from shore to shore my golden
 tears,

But neither god nor mortal heeds my
 pain.

Thou only, Balder, wast for ever kind,
 To take my hand, and wipe my tears,
 and say:

*Weep not, O Freya, weep no golden tears!
 One day the wandering Oder will return!
 Or thou wilt find him in thy faithful
 search*

*On some great road, or resting in an inn,
 Or at a ford, or sleeping by a tree.*

So Balder said;—but Oder, well I know,
 My truant Oder I shall see no more
 To the world's end; and Balder now is
 gone,

And I am left uncomforted in Heaven.'
 She spake; and all the Goddesses be-
 wail'd.

Last from among the Heroes one came
 near,

No God, but of the hero-troop the chief—
 Regner, who swept the northern sea with
 fleets,

And ruled o'er Denmark and the heathy
 isles,

Living; but Ella captured him and
 slew;—

A king whose fame then fill'd the vast of
 Heaven.

Now time obscures it, and men's later
 deeds.

He last approach'd the corpse, and
 spake, and said:—

"Balder, there yet are many Scalds
 in Heaven

Still left, and that chief Scald, thy
 brother Brage,

Whom we may bid to sing, though
 thou art gone.

And all these gladly, while we drink,
 we hear,

After the feast is done, in Odin's hall;
 But they harp ever on one string, and
 wake

Remembrance in our soul of wars alone,
 Such as on earth we valiantly have
 waged,

And blood, and ringing blows, and
 violent death.

But when thou sangest, Balder, thou
 didst strike

Another note, and, like a bird in spring,
 Thy voice of joyance minded us, and
 youth,

And wife, and children, and our ancient
 home.

Yes, and I, too, remember'd then no
 more

My dungeon, where the serpents stung
 me dead,

Nor Ella's victory on the English coast—
 But I heard Thora laugh in Gothland
 Isle,

And saw my shepherdess Aslauga, tend

Her flock along the white Norwegian beach.

Tears started to mine eyes with yearning joy,

Therefore with grateful heart I mourn thee dead."

So Regner spake, and all the Heroes groan'd.

But now the sun had pass'd the height of Heaven,

And soon had all that day been spent in wail;

But then the Father of the ages said:—

"Ye Gods, there well may be too much of wail!

Bring now the gather'd wood to Balder's ship;

Heap on the deck the logs, and build the pyre."

But when the Gods and Heroes heard, they brought

The wood to Balder's ship, and built a pile,

Full the deck's breadth, and lofty; then the corpse

Of Balder on the highest top they laid, With Nanna on his right, and on his left

Hoder, his brother, whom his own hand slew.

And they set jars of wine and oil to lean Against the bodies, and stuck torches near,

Splinters of pine-wood, soak'd with turpentine;

And brought his arms and gold, and all his stuff,

And slew the dogs who at his table fed, And his horse, Balder's horse, whom most he loved,

And placed them on the pyre, and Odin threw

A last choice gift thereon, his golden ring.

The mast they fixed, and hoisted up the sails,

Then they put fire to the wood; and Thor

Set his stout shoulder hard against the To push the ship through the thick sand;

sparks flew

From the deep trench she plough'd, so strong a God

Furrow'd it; and the water gurgled in. And the ship floated on the waves, and rock'd.

But in the hills a strong east-wind arose, And came down moaning to the sea;

first squalls

Ran black o'er the sea's face, then steady rush'd

The breeze, and fill'd the sails, and blew the fire.

And wreathed in smoke the ship stood out to sea.

Soon with a roaring rose the mighty fire,

And the pile crackled; and between the logs

Sharp quivering tongues of flame shot out, and leaped,

Curling and darting, higher, until they lick'd

The summit of the pile, the dead, the mast,

And ate the shrivelling sails; but still the ship

Drove on, ablaze above her hull with fire.

And the Gods stood upon the beach, and gazed.

And while they gazed, the sun went lurid down

Into the smoke-wrapt sea, and night came on.

Then the wind fell, with night, and there was calm;

But through the dark they watch'd the burning ship

Still carried o'er the distant waters on. Farther and farther, like an eye of fire.

And long, in the far dark, blazed Balder's pile;

But fainter, as the stars rose high, it flared,

The bodies were consumed, ash choked the pile.

And as, in a decaying winter-fire, A charr'd log, falling, makes a shower

of sparks—

So with a shower of sparks the pile fell in,

Reddening the sea around; and all was dark.

But the Gods went by starlight up the shore

To Asgard, and sate down in Odin's hall At table, and the funeral-feast began.

All night they ate the boar Serimner's flesh,

And from their horns, with silver rimn'd, drank mead,

Silent, and waited for the sacred morn. And morning over all the world was spread.

Then from their loathed feasts the Gods arose.

And took their horses, and set forth to ride

O'er the bridge Bifrost, where is Heimdall's watch,
 To the ash Igdrasil, and Ida's plain ;
 Thor came on foot, the rest on horse-back rode.
 And they found Mimir sitting by his fount
 Of wisdom, which beneath the ashtree springs ;
 And saw the Nornies watering the roots
 Of that world-shadowing tree with honey-dew.
 There came the Gods, and sate them down on stones ;
 And thus the Father of the ages said :—
 " Ye Gods, the terms ye know, which Hermod brought.
 Accept them or reject them ! both have grounds.
 Accept them, and they bind us, unfulfill'd,
 To leave for ever Balder in the grave,
 An unrecover'd prisoner, shade with shades.
 But how, ye say, should the fulfilment fail ?—
 Smooth sound the terms, and light to be fulfill'd ;
 For dear-beloved was Balder while he lived
 In Heaven and earth, and who would grudge him tears ?
 But from the traitorous seed of Lok they come,
 These terms, and I suspect some hidden fraud.
 Bethink ye, Gods, is there no other way ?—
 Speak, were not this a way, the way for Gods ?
 If I, if Odin, clad in radiant arms,
 Mounted on Sleipner, with the warrior Thor
 Drawn in his car beside me, and my sons,
 All the strong brood of Heaven, to swell my train,
 Should make irruption into Hela's realm,
 And set the fields of gloom ablaze with light,
 And bring in triumph Balder back to Heaven ? "
 Hespake, and his fierce sons applauded loud.
 But Freia, mother of the Gods, arose,
 Daughter and wife of Odin ; thus she said :—
 " Odin, thou whirlwind, what a threat is this !

Thou threatenest what transcends thy might, even thine.
 For of all powers the mightiest far art thou,
 Lord over men on earth, and Gods in Heaven ;
 Yet even from thee thyself hath been withheld
 One thing—to undo what thou thyself hast ruled.
 For all which hath been fixt, was fixt by thee.
 In the beginning, ere the Gods were born,
 Before the Heavens were builded, thou didst slay
 The giant Ymir, whom the abyss brought forth,
 Thou and thy brethren fierce, the sons of Bor,
 And cast his trunk to choke the abysmal void.
 But of his flesh and members thou didst build
 The earth and Ocean, and above them Heaven.
 And from the flaming world, where Muspel reigns,
 Thou sent'st and fetched'st fire, and madest lights,
 Sun, moon, and stars, which thou hast hung in Heaven,
 Dividing clear the paths of night and day.
 And Asgard thou didst build, and Midgard fort ;
 Then me thou mad'st ; of us the Gods were born.
 Last, walking by the sea, thou foundest spars
 Of wood, and framed'st men, who till the earth,
 Or on the sea, the field of pirates, sail.
 And all the race of Ymir thou didst drown,
 Save one, Bergelmer ;—he on shipboard fled
 Thy deluge, and from him the giants sprang.
 But all that brood thou hast removed far off,
 And set by Ocean's utmost marge to dwell ;
 But Hela into Niflheim thou threw'st,
 And gav'st her nine unlighted worlds to rule,
 A queen, and empire over all the dead.
 That empire wilt thou now invade, light up

Her darkness, from her grasp a subject
tear?—

Try it; but I, for one, will not applaud.
Nor do I merit, Odin, thou should'st slight
Me and my words, though thou be first
in Heaven;

For I too am a Goddess, born of thee,
Thine eldest, and of me the Gods are
sprung;

And all that is to come I know, but loek
In mine own breast, and have to none
reveal'd.

Come then! since Hela holds by right
her prey,
But offers terms for his release to
Heaven,

Accept the chance; thou canst no more
obtain.

Send through the world thy messengers;
entreat

All living and unliving things to weep
For Balder; if thou haply thus may'st
melt

Hela, and win the loved one back to
Heaven."

She spake, and on her face let fall her
veil,

And bow'd her head, and sate with
folded hands.

Nor did the all-ruling Odin slight her
word;

Straightway he spake, and thus ad-
dress'd the Gods:

"Go quickly forth through all the
world, and pray

All living and unliving things to weep
Balder, if haply he may thus be won."

When the Gods heard, they straight
arose, and took

Their horses, and rode forth through all
the world;

North, south, east, west, they struck,
and roam'd the world

Entreating all things to weep Balder's
death.

And all that lived, and all without life,
wept.

And as in winter, when the frost breaks
up,

At winter's end, before the spring
begins,

And a warm west-wind blows, and
thaw sets in—

After an hour a dripping sound is heard
In all the forests, and the soft-strewn
snow

Under the trees is dibbled thick with
holes,

And from the boughs the snowloads

And, in fields sloping to the south, dark
plots

Of grass peep out amid surrounding
snow,

And widen, and the peasant's heart is
glad—

So through the world was heard a drip-
ping noise

Of all things weeping to bring Balder
back;

And there fell joy upon the Gods to hear.
But Hermod rode with Niord, whom

he took
To show him spits and beaches of the sea

Far off, where some unwarn'd might
fail to weep—

Niord, the God of storms, whom fishers
know;

Not born in Heaven; he was in Van-
heim rear'd,

With men, but lives a hostage with the
Gods;

He knows each frith, and every rocky
creek

Fringed with dark pines, and sands
where seafowl scream—

They two scour'd every coast, and all
things wept.

And they rode home together, through
the wood

Of Jarnvid, which to east of Midgard lies
Bordering the giants, where the trees

are iron;
There in the wood before a cave they

came,
Where sate, in the cave's mouth, a skinny

hag,
Toothless and old; she gibes the passers

by.
Thok is she call'd, but now Lok wore her

shape;
She greeted them the first, and laugh'd,

and said:—
"Ye Gods, good lack, is it so dull in

Heaven,
That ye come pleasuring to Thok's iron

wood?
Lovers of change ye are, fastidious

sprites.
Look, as in some boor's yard a sweet-

breath'd cow,
Whose manger is stuff'd full of good

fresh hay,
Snuffs at it daintily, and stoops her head

To chew the straw, her litter, at her feet—
So ye grow squeamish, Gods, and sniff

at Heaven!"
She spake; but Hermod answer'd her

and said:—

"Thok, not for gibes we come, we come
for tears.

Balder is dead, and Hela holds her prey,
But will restore, if all things give him
tears.

Begrudge not thine! to all was Balder
dear."

Then, with a louder laugh, the hag
replied:—

"Is Balder dead? and do ye come for
tears?

Thok with dry eyes will weep o'er
Balder's pyre.

Weep him all other things, if weep they
will—

I weep him not! let Hela keep her prey."

She spake, and to the cavern's depth
she fled,

Mocking; and Hermod knew their toil
was vain.

And as seafaring men, who long have
wrought

In the great deep for gain, at last come
home,

And towards evening see the headlands
rise

Of their dear country, and can plain
descri

A fire of wither'd furze which boys have
lit

Upon the cliffs, or smoke of burning
weeds

Out of a till'd field inland;—then the
wind

Catches them, and drives out again to
sea;

And they go long days tossing up and
down

Over the gray sea-ridges, and the glimpse
Of port they had makes bitterer far their
toil—

So the Gods' cross was bitterer for their
joy.

Then, sad at heart, to Niord Hermod
spake:—

"It is the accuser Lok, who flouts us all!
Ride back, and tell in Heaven this heavy
news;

I must again below, to Hela's realm."

He spoke; and Niord set forth back to
Heaven.

But northward Hermod rode, the way
below,

The way he knew; and traversed Giall's
stream,

And down to Ocean groped, and cross'd
the ice,

And came beneath the wall, and found
the grate

Still lifted; well was his return fore-
known.

And once more Hermod saw around him
spread

The joyless plains, and heard the streams
of Heli.

But as he enter'd, on the extremest
bound

Of Niflheim, he saw one ghost come
near,

Hovering, and stopping oft, as if afraid—
Hoder, the unhappy, whom his own hand

slew.

And Hermod look'd, and knew his
brother's ghost,

And call'd him by his name, and sternly
said:—

"Hoder, ill-fated, blind in heart and
eyes!

Why tarriest thou to plunge thee in the
gulf

Of the deep inner gloom, but flitest here,
In twilight, on the lonely verge of Hell,

Far from the other ghosts, and Hela's
throne?

Doubtless thou fearest to meet Balder's
voice,

Thy brother, whom through folly thou
didst slay."

He spoke; but Hoder answer'd him,
and said:—

"Hermod the nimble, dost thou still
pursue

The unhappy with reproach, even in the
grave?

For this I died, and fled beneath the
gloom,

Not daily to endure abhorring Gods,
Nor with a hateful presence cumber

Heaven;

And canst thou not, even here, pass pity-
ing by?

No less than Balder have I lost the light
Of Heaven, and communion with my kin;

I too had once a wife, and once a child,
And substance, and a golden house in

Heaven—

But all I left of my own act, and fled
Below, and dost thou hate me even here?

Balder upbraids me not, nor hates at all,
Though he has cause, have any cause;

but he,
When that with downcast looks I hither
came,

Stretch'd forth his hand, and with be-
nignant voice,

Welcome, he said, *if there be welcome
here,*
Brother and fellow-sport of Lok with me!

And not to offend thee, Hermod, nor to
force
My hated converse on thee, came I up
From the deep gloom, where I will now
return ;
But earnestly I long'd to hover near,
Not too far off, when that thou camest by ;
To feel the presence of a brother God,
And hear the passage of a horse of
Heaven,
For the last time—for here thou com'st
no more."

He spake, and turn'd to go to the inner
gloom.
But Hermod stay'd him with mild words,
and said :—

"Thou doest well to chide me, Hoder
blind !
Truly thou say'st, the planning guilty
mind

Was Lok's ; the unwitting hand alone
was thine.

But Gods are like the sons of men in
this

When they have woe, they blame the
nearest cause.

Howbeit stay, and be appeased ! and
tell :

Sits Balder still in pomp by Hela's side,
Or is he mingled with the unnumber'd
dead ?"

And the blind Hoder answer'd him
and spake :—

"His place of state remains by Hela's
side,

But empty ; for his wife, for Nanna
came

Lately below, and join'd him ; and the
pair

Frequent the still recesses of the realm
Of Hela, and hold converse undisturb'd.

But they too, doubtless, will have
breathed the balm,

Which floats before a visitant from
Heaven,

And have drawn upward to this verge of
Hell."

He spake ; and, as he ceased, a puff
of wind

Roll'd heavily the leaden mist aside
Round where they stood, and they be-
held two forms

Make toward them o'er the stretching
cloudy plain.

And Hermod straight perceived them,
who they were

Balder and Nanna ; and to Balder said :—

"Balder, too truly thou foresaw'st a
snare !

Lok triumphs still, and Hela keeps her
prey.

No more to Asgard shalt thou come, nor
lodge

In thy own house, Breidablik, nor enjoy
The love all bear toward thee, nor train
up

Forset, thy son, to be beloved like thee.

Here must thou lie, and wait an endless
age.

Therefore for the last time, O Balder,
hail !"

He spake ; and Balder answer'd him,
and said :—

"Hail and farewell ! for here thou
com'st no more.

Yet mourn not for me, Hermod, when
thou sitt'st

In Heaven, nor let the other Gods
lament,

As wholly to be pitied, quite forlorn.
For Nanna hath rejoin'd me, who, of old,

In Heaven, was seldom parted from my
side ;

And still the acceptance follows me,
which crown'd

My former life, and cheers me even here.
The iron frown of Hela is relax'd

When I draw nigh, and the wan tribes
of dead

Love me, and gladly bring for my award
Their ineffectual feuds and feeble hates—

Shadows of hates, but they distress
them still."

And the fleet-footed Hermod made
reply :—

"Thou hast then all the solace death
allows.

Esteem and function ; and so far is well.
Yet here thou liest, Balder, underground,

Rusting for ever ; and the years roll on,
The generations pass, the ages grow,

And bring us nearer to the final day
When from the south shall march the
fiery band

And cross the bridge of Heaven, with
Lok for guide,

And Fenris at his heel with broken
chain ;

While from the east the giant Rymer
steers

His ship, and the great serpent makes to
land ;

And all are marshall'd in one flaming
square

Against the Gods, upon the plains of
Heaven.

I mourn thee, that thou canst not help
us then."

He spake ; but Balder answer'd him,
and said :—
“ Mourn not for me ! Mourn, Hermod,
for the Gods ;
Mourn for the men on earth, the Gods
in Heaven,
Who live, and with their eyes shall see
that day !
The day will come, when fall shall As-
gard's towers,
And Odin, and his sons, the seed of
Heaven ;
But what were I, to save them in that
hour ?
If strength might save them, could not
Odin save,
My father, and his pride, the warrior
Thor,
Vidar the silent, the impetuous Tyr ?
I, what were I, when these can nought
avail ?
Yet, doubtless, when the day of battle
comes,
And the two hosts are marshall'd, and
in Heaven
The golden-crested cock shall sound
alarm,
And his black brother-bird from hence
reply,
And bucklers clash, and spears begin to
pour—
Longing will stir within my breast,
though vain.
But not to me so grievous, as, I know,
To other Gods it were, is my enforced
Absence from fields where I could noth-
ing aid ;
For I am long since weary of your storm
Of carnage, and find, Hermod, in your
life
Something too much of war and broils,
which make
Life one perpetual fight, a bath of blood.
Mine eyes are dizzy with the arrowy
hail ;
Mine ears are stunn'd with blows, and
sick for calm.
Inactive therefore let me lie, in gloom,
Unarm'd, inglorious ; I attend the course
Of ages, and my late return to light,
In times less alien to a spirit mild,
In new-recover'd seats, the happier day.”
He spake ; and the fleet Hermod thus
replied :—
“ Brother, what seats are these, what
happier day ?
Tell me, that I may ponder it when
gone.” [him :—
And the ray-crowned Balder answer'd

“ Far to the south, beyond the blue,
there spreads
Another Heaven, the boundless—no one
yet
Hath reach'd it ; there hereafter shall
arise
The second Asgard, with another name.
Thither, when o'er this present earth
and Heavens
The tempest of the latter days hath
swept,
And they from sight have disappear'd,
and sunk,
Shall a small remnant of the Gods re-
pair ;
Hoder and I shall join them from the
grave.
There re-assembling we shall see emerge
From the bright Ocean at our feet an
earth
More fresh, more verdant than the last,
with fruits
Self-springing, and a seed of man pre-
served,
Who then shall live in peace, as now in
war.
But we in Heaven shall find again with
joy
The ruin'd palaces of Odin, seats
Familiar, halls where we have supp'd of
old ;
Re-enter them with wonder, never fill
Our eyes with gazing, and rebuild with
tears.
And we shall tread once more the well-
known plain
Of Ida, and among the grass shall find
The golden dice wherewith we play'd of
yore ;
And that will bring to mind the former
life
And pastime of the Gods, the wise dis-
course
Of Odin, the delights of other days.
O Hermod, pray that thou may'st join
us then !
Such for the future is my hope ; mean-
while,
I rest the thrall of Hela, and endure
Death, and the gloom which round me
even now
Thickens, and to its inner gulf recalls. ●
Farewell, for longer speech is not al-
low'd !”
He spoke, and waved farewell, and
gave his hand
To Nanna ; and she gave their brother
blind [the three
Her hand, in turn, for guidance ; and

Departed o'er the cloudy plain, and soon
 Faded from sight into the interior gloom.
 But Hermod stood beside his drooping
 horse,
 Mute, gazing after them in tears; and
 fain,
 Fain had he follow'd their receding steps,
 Though they to death were bound, and
 he to Heaven,
 Then; but a power he could not break
 withheld.
 And as a stork which idle boys have
 trapp'd,
 And tied him in a yard, at autumn sees
 Flocks of his kind pass flying o'er his
 head
 To warmer lands, and coasts that keep
 the sun;—
 He strains to join their flight, and from
 his shed
 Follows them with a long complaining
 cry—
 So Hermod gazed, and yearn'd to join
 his kin.

At last he sigh'd, and set forth back
 to Heaven. 1855.

STANZAS FROM THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE

THROUGH Alpine meadows soft-suffused
 With rain, where thick the crocus blows,
 Past the dark forges long disused,
 The mule-track from Saint Laurent goes.
 The bridge is cross'd, and slow we ride,
 Through forest, up the mountain-side.

The autumnal evening darkens round,
 The wind is up, and drives the rain;
 While, hark! far down, with strangled
 sound

Doth the Dead Guier's stream complain,
 Where that wet smoke, among the
 woods.

Over his boiling cauldron broods.

Swift rush the spectral vapors white
 Past limestone scars with ragged pines,
 Showing—then blotting from our
 sight!—

Halt—through the cloud-drift something
 shines!

High in the valley, wet and drear,
 The huts of Courrierie appear.

Strike leftward! cries our guide; and
 higher

Mounts up the stony forest-way.
 At last the encircling trees retire;

Look! through the showery twilight
 gray
 What pointed roofs are these advance?—
 A palace of the Kings of France?

Approach, for what we seek is here!
 Alight, and sparely sup, and wait
 For rest in this outbuilding near;
 Then cross the sward and reach that
 gate.

Knock; pass the wicket! Thou art
 come

To the Carthusians' world-famed home.

The silent courts, where night and day
 Into their stone-carved basins cold
 The splashing icy fountains play—
 The humid corridors behold!
 Where, ghostlike in the deepening night
 Cowl'd forms brush by in gleaming
 white.

The chapel, where no organ's peal
 Invests the stern and naked prayer—
 With penitential cries they kneel
 And wrestle: rising then, with bare
 And white uplifted faces stand,
 Passing the Host from hand to hand;

Each takes, and then his visage wan
 Is buried in his cowl once more.
 The cells!—the suffering Son of Man
 Upon the wall—the knee-worn floor—
 And where they sleep, that wooden bed,
 Which shall their coffin be, when dead!

The library, where tract and tome
 Not to feed priestly pride are there,
 To hymn the conquering march of Rome,
 Nor yet to amuse, as ours are!
 They paint of souls the inner strife,
 Their drops of blood, their death in life.

The garden, overgrown—yet mild,
 See, fragrant herbs are flowering there!
 Strong children of the Alpine wild
 Whose culture is the brethren's care;
 Of human tasks their only one,
 And cheerful works beneath the sun.

Those halls, too, destined to contain
 Each its own pilgrim-host of old,
 From England, Germany, or Spain—
 All are before me! I behold
 The House, the Brotherhood austere!
 —And what am I, that I am here?

For rigorous teachers seized my youth,
 And purged its faith, and trimm'd it
 fire,

Show'd me the high, white star of Truth,
There bade me gaze, and there aspire.
Even now their whispers pierce the
gloom ;

What dost thou in this living tomb ?

Forgive me, masters of the mind !
At whose behest I long ago
So much unlearn't, so much resign'd—
I come not here to be your foe !
I seek these anchorites, not in ruth,
To curse and to deny your truth ;

Not as their friend, or child, I speak !
But as, on some far northern strand,
Thinking of his own Gods, a Greek
In pity and mournful awe might stand
Before some fallen Runic stone—
For both were faiths, and both are gone.

Wandering between two worlds, one
dead,

The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest my head,
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn.
Their faith, my tears, the world deride—
I come to shed them at their side.

Oh, hide me in your gloom profound,
Ye solemn seats of holy pain !
Take me, cowl'd forms, and fence me
round

Till I possess my soul again ;
Till free my thoughts before me roll,
Not chafed by hourly false control !

For the world cries your faith is now
But a dead time's exploded dream ;
My melancholy, sciolists say,
Is a pass'd mode, an outworn theme—
As if the world had ever had
A faith, or sciolists been sad !

Ah, if it be pass'd, take away,
At least, the restlessness, the pain ;
Be man henceforth no more a prey
To these out-dated stings again !
The nobleness of grief is gone—
Ah, leave us not the fret alone !

But—if you cannot give us ease—
Last of the race of them who grieve
Here leave us to die out with these
Last of the people who believe !
Silent, while years engrave the brow ;
Silent—the best are silent now.

Achilles ponders in his tent,
The kings of modern thought are dumb ;
Silent they are, though not content,

And wait to see the future come.
They have the grief men had of yore,
But they contend and cry no more.

Our fathers water'd with their tears
This sea of time whereon we sail,
Their voices were in all men's ears
We pass'd within their puissant hail.
Still the same ocean round us raves,
But we stand mute, and watch the waves.

For what avail'd it, all the noise
And outcry of the former men ?—
Say, have their sons achieved more joys,
Say, is life lighter now than then ;
The sufferers died, they left their pain—
The pangs which tortured them remain.

What helps it now, that Byron bore,
With haughty scorn which mock'd the
smart,

Through Europe to the Ætolian shore
The pageant of his bleeding heart ?
That thousands counted every groan,
And Europe made his woe her own ?

What boots it, Shelley ! that the breeze
Carried thy lovely wail away,
Musical through Italian trees
Which fringe thy soft blue Spezzian
bay ?

Inheritors of thy distress
Have restless hearts one throb the less ?

Or are we easier, to have read,
O Obermann ! the sad, stern page,
Which tells us how thou hid'st thy
head

From the fierce tempest of thine age
In the lone brakes of Fontainebleau,
Or chalets near the Alpine snow ?

Ye slumber in your silent grave !—
The world, which for an idle day
Grace to your mood of sadness gave,
Long since hath flung her weeds away.
The eternal trifler breaks your spell ;
But we—we learned your lore too well !

Years hence, perhaps, may dawn an age,
More fortunate, alas ! than we,
Which without hardness will be sage,
And gay without frivolity.
Sons of the world, oh, speed those years ;
But, while we wait, allow our tears !

Allow them ! We admire with awe
The exulting thunder of your race ;
You give the universe your law,

You triumph over time and space !
Your pride of life, your tireless powers,
We laud them, but they are not ours.

We are like children rear'd in shade
Beneath some old-world abbey wall,
Forgotten in a forest-glade,
And secret from the eyes of all.
Deep, deep the greenwood round them
waves,
Their abbey, and its close of graves !

But, where the road runs near the stream,
Of through the trees they catch a glance
Of passing troops in the sun's beam—
Pennon, and plume, and flashing lance !
Forth to the world those soldiers fare,
To life, to cities, and to war !

And through the wood, another way,
Faint bugle-notes from far are borne,
Where hunters gather, staghounds bay,
Round some fair forest-lodge at morn.
Gay dames are there, in sylvan green ;
Laughter and cries—those notes be-
tween !

The banners flashing through the trees
Make their blood dance and chain their
eyes ;
That bugle-music on the breeze
Arrests them with a charm'd surprise.
Banner by turns and bugle woo :
Ye shy recluses, follow too !

O children, what do ye reply ?—
“ Action and pleasure, will ye roam
Through these secluded dells to cry
And call us ?—but too late ye come !
Too late for us your call ye blow,
Whose bent was taken long ago.

“ Long since we pace this shadow'd nave ;
We watch those yellow tapers shine,
Emblems of hope over the grave,
In the high altar's depth divine ;
The organ carries to our ear
Its accents of another sphere.

“ Fenced early in this cloistral round
Of reverie, of shade, of prayer,
How should we grow in other ground ?
How can we flower in foreign air ?
—Pass, banners, pass, and bugles, cease ;
And leave our desert to its peace ! ”

1855.¹

¹ In *Fraser's Magazine*. First included in Arnold's *Poetical Works* in 1867.

FROM SWITZERLAND

ISOLATION. TO MARGUERITE

We were apart ; yet, day by day,
I bade my heart more constant be.
I bade it keep the world away,
And grow a home for only thee ;
Nor fear'd but thy love likewise grew,
Like mine, each day, more tried, more
true.

The fault was grave ! I might have
known,
What far too soon, alas ! I learn'd—
The heart can bind itself alone,
And faith may oft be unreturn'd.
Self-sway'd our feelings ebb and swell—
Thou lov'st no more ;—Farewell ! Fare-
well !

Farewell !—and thou, thou lonely heart,
Which never yet without remorse
Even for a moment didst depart
From thy remote and spheréd course
To haunt the place where passions reign—
Back to thy solitude again !

Back ! with the conscious thrill of shame
Which Luna felt, that summer-night,
Flash through her pure immortal frame,
When she forsook the starry height
To hang over Endymion's sleep
Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep.

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved
How vain a thing is mortal love,
Wandering in Heaven, far removed.
But thou hast long had place to prove
This truth—to prove, and make thine
own :
“ Thou hast been, shalt be, art, alone.”

Or, if not quite alone, yet they
Which touch thee are unmating things—
Ocean and clouds and night and day ;
Lorn autumns and triumphant springs ;
And life, and others' joy and pain,
And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men—for they, at least,
Have *dream'd* two human hearts might
blend
In one, and were through faith released
From isolation without end
Prolong'd ; nor knew, although not less
Alone than thou, their loneliness.

1857.

TO MARGUERITE—CONTINUED

YES! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live *alone*.
The islands feel the encompassing flow,
And then their endless bounds they
know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing;
And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour—

Oh! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent!
Now round us spreads the watery plain—
Oh, might our marges meet again!

Who order'd, that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd?
Who renders vain their deep desire?—
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea.
(1852.)¹ 1857.

W THYRSIS²

A MONODY, to commemorate the author's
friend,

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH, who died at
Florence, 1861

How changed is here each spot man
makes or fills!

In the two Hinkseys nothing keeps the
same;

The village street its haunted man-
sion lacks,

And from the sign is gone Sibylla's
name,

And from the roofs the twisted chim-
ney-stacks—

¹ Standing alone, under the title: *To Marguerite*.

² "There are in the English language three elegiac poems so great that they eclipse and efface all the elegiac poetry we know; all of Italian, all of Greek. It is only because the latest born is yet new to us that it can seem strange or rash to say so. The *Thyrsis* of Mr. Arnold makes a third with *Lycidas* and *Adonais*. . . . *Thyrsis*, like *Lycidas*, has a quiet and tender undertone which gives it something of sacred." (*Swinburne*.)

Are ye too changed, ye hills?
See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men
To-night from Oxford up your path-
way strays!

Here came I often, often, in old days—
Thyrsis and I; we still had Thyrsis then.

Kuns it not here, the track by Childs-
worth Farm,

Past the high wood, to where the elm-
tree crowns

The hill behind whose ridge the sun-
set flames?

The signal-elm, that looks on Ilsey
Downs,

The Vale, the three lone weirs, the
youthful Thames?—

This winter-eve is warm,
Humid the air! leafless, yet soft as
spring,

The tender purple spray on copse
and briars!

And that sweet city with her dream-
ing spires,
She needs not June for beauty's height-
ening.

Lovely all times she lies, lovely to-
night!—

Only, methinks, some loss of habit's
power

Befalls me wandering through this
upland dim.

Once pass'd I blindfold here, at any
hour;

Now seldom come I, since I came with
him.

That single elm-tree bright
Against the west—I miss it! is it gone?

We prized it dearly; while it stood,
we said,

Our friend, the Gipsy-Scholar, was
not dead;

While the tree lived, he in these fields
lived on.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits
here,

But once I knew each field, each
flower, each stick;

And with the country-folk acquaint-
tance made

By barn in threshing-time, by new-
built rick.

Here, too, our shepherd-pipes we
first assay'd.

Ah me! this many a year
My pipe is lost, my shepherd's holi-
day!

Needs must I lose them, needs with
heavy heart
Into the world and wave of men de-
part;
But Thyrsis of his own will went away.

It irk'd him to be here, he could not rest.
He loved each simple joy the country
yields,

He loved his mates ; but yet he could
not keep,

For that a shadow lour'd on the fields,
Here with the shepherds and the
silly sheep.

Some life of men unblest
He knew, which made him droop, and
fill'd his head.

He went ; his piping took a troubled
sound

Of storms that rage outside our
happy ground ;

He could not wait their passing, he is
dead.

So, some tempestuous morn in early
June, [is o'er,

When the year's primal burst of bloom
Before the roses and the longest
day— [floor

When garden-walks and all the grassy
With blossoms red and white of
fallen May

And chestnut-flowers are strewn—
So have I heard the cuckoo's parting
cry,

From the wet field, through the vext
garden-trees,

Come with the volleying rain and
tossing breeze :

*The bloom is gone, and with the bloom
go I !*

Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou
go ?

Soon will the high Midsummer pomps
come on,

Soon will the musk carnations break
and swell,

Soon shall we have gold-dusted snap-
dragon,

Sweet-William with his homely
cottage-smell,

And stocks in fragrant blow ;

Roses that down the alleys shine afar,
And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,

And groups under the dreaming
garden trees,

And the full moon, and the white
evening-star.

He harkens not ! light comer, he is
flown !

What matters it ? next year he will
return,

And we shall have him in the
sweet spring-days,

With whitening hedges, and un-
crumpling fern,

And blue-bells trembling by the
forest-ways,

And scent of hay new-mown.

But Thyrsis never more we swains
shall see ;

See him come back, and cut a
smoother reed,

And blow a strain the world at last
shall heed—

For Time, not Corydon, hath conquer'd
thee !

Alack, for Corydon no rival now !—

But when Sicilian shepherds lost a
mate,

Some good survivor with his flute
would go,

Piping a ditty sad for Bion's fate ;
And cross the unpermitted ferry's
flow,

And relax Pluto's brow,

And make leap up with joy the beaute-
ous head

Of Proserpine, among whose
crowned hair

Are flowers first open'd on Sicilian
air,

And flute his friend, like Orpheus,
from the dead.

O easy access to the hearer's grace

When Dorian shepherds sang to
Proserpine !

For she herself had trod Sicilian
fields,

She knew the Dorian water's gush
divine,

She knew each lily white which
Enna yields,

Each rose with blushing face ;

She loved the Dorian pipe, the Dorian
strain.

But ah, of our poor Thames she
never heard ! [stirr'd ;

Her foot the Cumner cowslips never
And we should tease her with our
plaint in vain !

Well ! wind-dispersed and vain the
words will be, [hour

Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its

In the old haunt, and find our tree-
topp'd hill!
Who, if not I, for questing here hath
power?

I know the wood which hides the
daffodil,

I know the Fyfield tree,
I know what white, what purple fri-
tillaries

The grassy harvest of the river-
fields,

Above by Ensham, down by Sand-
ford, yields,

And what sedged brooks are Thames's
tributaries;

I know these slopes; who knows them
if not I?—

But many a dingle on the loved hill-
side,

With thorns once studded, old,
white-blossom'd trees,

Where thick the cowslips grew, and
far descried

High tower'd the spikes of purple
orchises,

Hath since our day put by
The coronals of that forgotten time;

Down each green bank hath gone
the ploughboy's team,

And only in the hidden brookside
gleam

Primroses, orphans of the flowery
prime.

Where is the girl, who by the boatman's
door,

Above the locks, above the boating-
throng,

Unmoor'd our skiff when through
the Wytham flats,

Red loosestrife and blond meadow-
sweet among

And darting swallows and light
water-gnats,

We track'd the shy Thames shore?
Where are the mowers, who, as the
tiny swell

Of our boat passing heaved the river-
grass,

Stood with suspended scythe to see
us pass?—

They all are gone, and thou art gone
as well!

Yes, thou art gone! and round me too
the night

In ever-nearing circle weaves her
shade.

I see her veil draw soft across the
day,

I feel her slowly chilling breath invade
The cheek grown thin, the brown
hair sprent with gray;

I feel her finger light
Laid pausefully upon life's headlong
train;—

The foot less prompt to meet the
morning dew,

The heart less bounding at emo-
tion new,

And hope, once crush'd, less quick to
spring again.

And long the way appears, which
seem'd so short

To the less practised eye of sanguine
youth;

And high the mountain-tops, in
cloudy air,

The mountain-tops where is the
throne of Truth,

Tops in life's morning-sun so bright
and bare!

Unbreachable the fort
Of the long-batter'd world uplifts its
wall;

And strange and vain the earthly
turmoil grows,

And near and real the charm of thy
repose,

And night as welcome as a friend
would fall.

But hush! the upland hath a sudden
loss

Of quiet!—Look, adown the dusk
hill-side,

A troop of Oxford hunters going
home,

As in old days, jovial and talking,
ride!

From hunting with the Berkshire
hounds they come,

Quick! let me fly, and cross
Into yon further field!—"Tis done,
and see,

Back'd by the sunset, which doth
glorify

The orange and pale violet evening-
sky,

Bare on its lonely ridge, the Tree!
the Tree!

I take the omen! Eve lets down her
veil,

The white fog creeps from bush to
bush about.

The west unflushes, the high stars
grow bright,
And in the scatter'd farms the lights
come out.
I cannot reach the signal-tree to-
night,
Yet, happy omen, hail !
Hear it from thy broad lucent Arno-
vale
(For there thine earth-forgetting
eyelids keep
The morningless and unawakening
sleep
Under the flowery oleanders pale),
Hear it, O Thyrsis, still our tree is
there !—
Ah, vain ! These English fields, this
upland dim,
These brambles pale with mist en-
garlanded,
That lone, sky-pointing tree, are not
for him ;
To a boon southern country he is
fled,
And now in happier air,
Wandering with the great Mother's
train divine
(And purer or more subtle soul than
thee,
I trow, the mighty Mother doth not
see)
Within a folding of the Apennine,
Thou hearest the immortal chants of
old !—
Putting his sickle to the perilous
grain
In the hot cornfield of the Phrygian
king,
For thee the Lityrses-song again
Young Daphnis with his silver voice
doth sing ;
Sings his Sicilian fold,
His sheep, his hapless love, his blinded
eyes—
And how a call celestial round him
rang,
And heavenward from the fountain-
brink he sprang,
And all the marvel of the golden
skies.
There thou art gone, and me thou leavest
here
Sole in these fields ! yet will I not de-
spair.
Despair I will not, while I yet de-
sery

'Neath the mild canopy of English air
That lonely tree against the western
sky.
Still, still these slopes, 'tis clear,
Our Gipsy-Scholar haunts, outliving
thee !
Fields where soft sheep from cages
pull the hay,
Woods with anemones in flower till
May,
Know him a wanderer still ; then why
not me ?
A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,
Shy to illumine ; and I seek it too.
This does not come with houses or
with gold,
With place, with honor, and a flatter-
ing crew ;
'Tis not in the world's market
bought and sold—
But the smooth-slipping weeks
Drop by, and leave its seeker still
untired ;
Out of the heed of mortals he is
gone,
He wends unfollow'd, he must house
alone ;
Yet on he fares, by his own heart in-
spired.
Thou too, O Thyrsis, on like quest wast
bound ;
Thou wanderdest with me for a little
hour !
Men gave thee nothing ; but this
happy quest,
If men esteemed thee feeble, gave thee
power,
If men procured thee trouble, gave
thee rest.
And this rude Cumner ground,
Its fir-topped Hurst, its farms, its
quiet fields,
Here cam'st thou in thy jocund
youthful time,
Here was thine height of strength,
thy golden prime !
And still the haunt beloved a virtue
yields.
What though the music of thy rustic
flute
Kept not for long its happy, country
tone ;
Lost it too soon, and learnt a stormy
note
Of men contention-tost, of men who
groan,

Which task'd thy pipe too sore, and
tired thy throat—

It fail'd, and thou wast mute!
Yet hadst thou always visions of our
light,

And long with men of care thou
couldst not stay.

And soon thy foot resumed its wan-
dering way,
Left human haunt, and on alone till
night.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits
here!

'Mid city-noise, not, as with thee of
yore,

Thyrsis! in reach of sheep-bells is
my home.

—Then through the great town's harsh,
heart-wearying roar,

Let in thy voice a whisper often
come,

To chase fatigue and fear:

*Why faintest thou! I wander'd till I died.
Roam on! The light we sought is
shining still.*

*Dost thou ask proof? Our tree yet
crowns the hill,*

Our Scholar travels yet the loved hill-side.
1866.

YOUTH AND CALM

'Tis death! and peace, indeed, is here,
And ease from shame, and rest from fear.

There's nothing can disarm now

The smoothness of that limpid brow.

But is a calm like this, in truth,

The crowning end of life and youth,

And when this boon rewards the dead,

Are all debts paid, has all been said?

And is the heart of youth so light,

Its step so firm, its eyes so bright,

Because on its hot brow there blows

A wind of promise and repose

From the far grave, to which it goes;

Because it hath the hope to come,

One day, to harbor in the tomb?

Ah no, the bliss youth dreams is one

For daylight, for the cheerful sun,

For feeling nerves and living breath—

Youth dreams a bliss on this side death.

It dreams a rest, if not more deep,

More grateful than this marble sleep;

It hears a voice within it tell:

*Calm's not life's crown, though calm is
well.*

'T is all perhaps which man acquires,

But 'tis not what our youth desires.

(1852). 1867.

AUSTERITY OF POETRY

THAT son of Italy who tried to blow,
Ere Dante came, the trump of sacred
song,

In his light youth amid a festal throng
Sate with his bride to see a public show.

Fair was the bride, and on her front did
glow

Youth like a star; and what to youth
belong—

Gay raiment, sparkling gauds, elation
strong.

A prop gave way! crash fell a platform!
lo,

'Mid struggling sufferers, hurt to death,
she lay!

Shuddering, they drew her garments
off—and found

A robe of sackcloth next the smooth,
white skin.

Such, poets, is your bride, the Muse!
young, gay,

Radiant, adorn'd outside; a hidden
ground

Of thought and of austerity within.

1867.

WORLDLY PLACE

Even in a palace, life may be led well!

So spake the imperial sage, purest of men,

Marcus Aurelius. But the stifling den

Of common life, where, crowded up
pell-mell,

Our freedom for a little bread we sell,
And drudge under some foolish master's

ken
Who rates us if we peer outside our

pen—

Match'd with a palace, is not this a hell?

Even in a palace! On his truth sincere,

Who spoke these words, no shadow ever
came;

And when my ill-school'd spirit is aflame

Some nobler, ampler stage of life to win,

I'll stop, and say: "There were no suc-
cor here!

The aids to noble life are all within."

1867.

EAST LONDON

'Twas August, and the fierce sun over-
head

Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal
Green,

And the pale weaver, through his
windows seen

In Spitalfields, look'd thrice dispirited,

I met a preacher there I knew, and said :
 "Ill and o'erwork'd, how fare you in
 this scene?"—

"Bravely!" said he; "for I of late have
 been

Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ,
the living bread."

O human soul! as long as thou canst so
 Set up a mark of everlasting light,
 Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,
 To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou
 roam—

Not with lost toil thou laborest through
 the night!

Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st
 indeed thy home. 1867.

WEST LONDON

CROUCH'D on the pavement, close by
 Belgrave Square,
 A tramp I saw, ill, moody, and tongued-
 tied.

A babe was in her arms, and at her side
 A girl; their clothes were rags, their
 feet were bare.

Some laboring meh, whose work lay
 somewhere there,

Pass'd opposite; she touch'd her girl,
 who hied

Across, and begg'd, and came back
 satisfied.

The rich she had let pass with frozen
 stare.

Thought I: "Above her state this spirit
 towers;

She will not ask of aliens, but of friends,
 Of sharers in a common human fate.

She turns from that cold succor, which
 attends

The unknown little from the unknow-
 ing great,

And points us to a better time than
 ours." 1867.

EAST AND WEST

In the bare midst of Anglesey they show
 Two springs which close by one another
 play;

And, "Thirteen hundred years ago,"
 they say,

"Two saints met often where those
 waters flow.

One came from Penmon westward, and
 a glow

Whiten'd his face from the sun's front-
 ing ray;

Eastward the other, from the dying day,

And he with unsunn'd face did always
 go."

Seiriol the Bright, Kybi the Dark! men
 said.

The seër from the East was then in light,
 The seër from the West was then in
 shade.

Ah! now 'tis changed. In conquering
 sunshine bright

The man of the bold West now comes
 array'd;

He of the mystic East is touch'd with
 night. 1867.

W

THE BETTER PART

LONG fed on boundless hopes, O race of
 man,

How angrily thou spurn'st all simpler
 fare!

"Christ," some one says, "was human
 as we are;

No judge eyes us from Heaven, our sin
 to scan;

We live no more, when we have done
 our span."

"Well, then, for Christ," thou answerest,
 "who can care?

From sin, which Heaven records not,
 why forbear?

Live we like brutes our life without a
 plan!"

So answerest thou; but why not rather
 say:

"Hath man no second life?—*Pitch this
 one high!*

Sits there no judge in Heaven, our sin
 to see?—

*More strictly, then, the inward judge
 obey!*

Was Christ a man like us? *Ah! let us try
 If we then, too, can be such men as he!*"

1867.

IMMORTALITY

FOIL'D by our fellow-men, depress'd,
 outworn,

We leave the brutal world to take its
 way,

And, *Patience! in another life*, we say,
*The world shall be thrust down, and we
 up-borne.*

And will not, then, the immortal armies
 scorn

The world's poor, routed leavings? or
 will they,

Who fail'd under the heat of this life's
 day,

Support the fervors of the heavenly
morn?

No, no! the energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, but not begun;
And he who flagg'd not in the earthly
strife,

From strength to strength advancing—
only he,

His soul well-knit, and all his battles
won,

Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.
1867.

W

DOVER BEACH

The sea is calm to-night,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits;—on the French coast
the light

Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of Eng-
land stand,

Glimmering and vast, out in the tran-
quil bay.

Come to the window, sweet is the night-
air!

Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd
land,

Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back,
and fling,

At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægæan, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith

Was once, too, at the full, and round
earth's shore

Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear

Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath

Of the night-wind, down the vast edges
drear

And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true

To one another! for the world, which
seems

To lie before us like a land of dreams,

So various, so beautiful, so new,

Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor
light,

Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for
pain;

And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle
and flight,

Where ignorant armies clash by night.
1867.

W

GROWING OLD

WHAT is it to grow old?

Is it to lose the glory of the form,

The lustre of the eye?

Is it for beauty to forego her wreath?

—Yes, but not this alone.

Is it to feel our strength—

Not our bloom only, but our strength—
decay?

Is it to feel each limb

Grow stiffer, every function less exact,

Each nerve more loosely strung?

Yes, this, and more; but not

Ah, 't is not what in youth we dream'd
't would be!

'T is not to have our life

Mellow'd and soften'd as with sunset-
glow,

A golden day's decline.

'T is not to see the world

As from a height, with rapt prophetic
eyes,

And heart profoundly stirr'd;

And weep, and feel the fulness of the
past,

The years that are no more.

It is to spend long days

And not once feel that we were ever
young;

It is to add, immured

In the hot prison of the present, month

To month with weary pain.

It is to suffer this,

And feel but half, and feebly, what we
feel.

Deep in our hidden heart

Festers the dull remembrance of a
change,

But no emotion—none.

It is—last stage of all—

When we are frozen up within, and quite
The phantom of ourselves,

To hear the world applaud the hollow
ghost

Which blamed the living man. 1867.

PIS-ALLER

"MAN is blind because of sin,
Revelation makes him sure ;
Without that, who looks within,
Looks in vain, for all 's obscure."

Nay, look closer into man !
Tell me, can you find indeed
Nothing sure, no moral plan
Clear prescribed, without your creed ?

"No, I nothing can perceive !
Without that, all 's dark for men.
That, or nothing, I believe,"—
For God's sake, believe it then !

1867.

THE LAST WORD

CREEP into thy narrow bed,
Creep, and let no more be said !
Vain thy onset ! all stands fast.
Thou thyself must break at last.

Let the long contention cease !
Geese are swans, and swans are geese.
Let them have it how they will !
Thou art tired ; best be still.

They out-talk'd thee, hiss'd thee, tore
thee ?
Better men fared thus before thee ;
Fired their ringing shot and pass'd,
Hotly charged—and sank at last.

Charge once more, then, and be dumb !
Let the victors, when they come,
When the forts of folly fall,
Find thy body by the wall !

1867.

BACCHANALIA ;

OR,

THE NEW AGE

I

THE evening comes, the fields are still.
The tinkle of the thirsty rill,
Unheard all day, ascends again ;
Deserted is the half-mown plain,
Silent the swaths ! the ringing wain,
The mower's cry, the dog's alarms,
All housed within the sleeping farms !
The business of the day is done,
The last-left haymaker is gone.
And from the thyme upon the height,
And from the elder-blossom white

And pale dog-roses in the hedge,
And from the mint-plant in the sedge,
In puffs of balm the night-air blows
The perfume which the day foregoes.
And on the pure horizon far,
See, pulsing with the first-born star,
The liquid sky above the hill !
The evening comes, the fields are still.

Loitering and leaping,
With saunter, with bounds—
Flickering and circling
In files and in rounds—
Gaily their pine-staff green
Tossing in air,
Loose o'er their shoulders white
Showering their hair—
See ! the wild Mænads
Break from the wood,
Youth and Iacchus
Maddening their blood.
See ! through the quiet land
Rioting they pass—
Fling the fresh heaps about,
Trample the grass.
Tear from the rifled hedge
Garlands, their prize ;
Fill with their sports the field,
Fill with their cries.

Shepherd, what ails thee, then ?
Shepherd, why mute ?
Forth with thy joyous song !
Forth with thy flute !
Tempts not the revel blithe ?
Lure not their cries ?
Glow not their shoulders smooth ?
Melt not their eyes ?
Is not, on cheeks like those,
Lovely the flush ?
—Ah, so the quiet was !
So was the hush !

II

The epoch ends, the world is still.
The age has talk'd and work'd its fill—
The famous orators have shone,
The famous poets sung and gone,
The famous men of war have fought,
The famous speculators thought,
The famous players, sculptors, wrought,
The famous painters fill'd their wall,
The famous critics judged it all.
The combatants are parted now—
Uphung the spear, unbent the bow,
The puissant crown'd, the weak laid low.
And in the after-silence sweet,
Now strifes are hush'd, our ears doth
meet,

Ascending pure, the bell-like fame
Of this or that down-trodden name,
Delicate spirits, push'd away
In the hot press of the noon-day.
And o'er the plain, where the dead age
Did its now silent warfare wage—
O'er that wide plain, now wrapt in
gloom,
Where many a splendor finds its tomb,
Many spent fames and fallen might—
The one or two immortal lights
Rise slowly up into the sky
To shine there everlastingly,
Like stars over the bounding hill.
The epoch ends, the world is still.

Thundering and bursting
In torrents, in waves—
Carolling and shouting
Over tombs, amid graves—
See! on the cumber'd plain
Clearing a stage,
Scattering the past about,
Comes the new age.
Bards make new poems,
Thinkers new schools,
Statesmen new systems,
Critics new rules.
All things begin again;
Life is their prize;
Earth with their deeds they fill,
Fill with their cries.

Poet, what ails thee, then?
Say, why so mute?
Forth with thy praising voice!
Forth with thy flute!
Loiterer! why sittest thou
Sunk in thy dream?
Tempt not the bright new age?
Shines not its stream?
Look, ah, what genius,
Art, science, wit!
Soldiers like Caesar,
Statesmen like Pitt!
Sculptors like Phidias,
Raphaels in shoals,
Poets like Shakespeare—
Beautiful souls!
See, on their glowing cheeks
Heavenly the flush!
—Ah, so the silence was!
So was the hush!

The world but feels the present's spell,
The poet feels the past as well;
Whatever men have done, might do,
Whatever thought, might think it too.
1867.

PALLADIUM

SET where the upper streams of Simois
flow
Was the Palladium, high 'mid rock and
wood;
And Hector was in Ilium, far below,
And fought, and saw it not—but there
it stood!

It stood, and sun and moonshine rain'd
their light
On the pure columns of its glen-built
hall,
Backward and forward roll'd the waves
of fight
Round Troy—but while this stood, Troy
could not fall.

So, in its lovely moonlight, lives the
soul.
Mountains surround it and sweet virgin
air;
Cold plashing, past it, crystal waters
roll;
We visit it by moments, ah, too rare!

We shall renew the battle in the plain
To-morrow; red with blood will Xanthus
be;
Hector and Ajax will be there again,
Helen will come upon the wall to see.

Then we shall rust in shade, or shine in
strife,
And fluctuate 'twixt blind hopes and
blind despairs,
And fancy that we put forth all our life,
And never know how with the soul it
fares.

Still doth the soul, from its lone fastness
high,
Upon our life a ruling effluence send.
And when it fails, fight as we will, we
die;
And while it lasts, we cannot wholly end
1867.

A WISH

I ASK not that my bed of death
From bands of greedy heirs be free;
For these besiege the latest breath
Of fortune's favor'd sons, not me.

I ask not each kind soul to keep
Tearless, when of my death he hears
Let those who will, if any, weep!

There are worse plagues on earth than
tears.

I ask but that my death may find
The Freedom to my life denied ;
Ask but the folly of mankind
Then, then at last, to quit my side.

Spare me the whispering, crowded room,
The friends who come, and gape, and go ;
The ceremonious air of gloom—
All, which makes death a hideous show !

Nor bring, to see me cease to live,
Some doctor full of phrase and fame,
To shake his sapient head, and give
The ill he cannot cure a name.

Nor fetch, to take the accustom'd toll
Of the poor sinner bound for death,
His brother-doctor of the soul,
To canvass with official breath

The future and its viewless things—
That undiscover'd mystery
Which one who feels death's winnowing
wings
Must needs read clearer, sure, than he !

Bring none of these ; but let me be,
While all around in silence lies,
Moved to the window near, and see
Once more, before my dying eyes,

Bathed in the sacred dews of morn
The wide aerial landscape spread—
The world which was ere I was born,
The world which lasts when I am dead ;

Which never was the friend of *one*,
Nor promised love it could not give,
But lit for all its generous sun,
And lived itself, and made us live.

There let me gaze, till I become
In soul, with what I gaze on, wed !
To feel the universe my home ;
To have before my mind—instead

Of the sick room, the mortal strife,
The turmoil for a little breath—
The pure eternal course of life,
Not human combatings with death !

Thus feeling, gazing, might I grow
Composed, refresh'd, ennobled, clear ;
Then willing let my spirit go
To work or wait elsewhere or here !

1867.

RUGBY CHAPEL

NOVEMBER 1857

COLDLY, sadly descends
The autumn-evening. The field
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts
Of wither'd leaves, and the elms,
Fade into dimness apace,
Silent ;—hardly a shout
From a few boys late at their play !
The lights come out in the street,
In the school-room windows ;—but cold,
Solemn, unlighted, austere,
Through the gathering darkness, arise
The chapel-walls, in whose bound
Thou, my father ! art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom
Of the autumn evening. But ah !
That word, *gloom*, to my mind
Brings thee back, in the light
Of thy radiant vigor, again ;
In the gloom of November we pass'd
Days not dark at thy side ;
Seasons impair'd not the ray
Of thy buoyant cheerfulness clear.
Such thou wast ! and I stand
In the autumn evening and think
Of bygone autumns with thee.

Fifteen years have gone round
Since thou arosest to tread,
In the summer-morning, the road
Of death, at a call unforeseen,
Sudden. For fifteen years,
We who till then in thy shade
Rest'd as under the boughs
Of a mighty oak, have endured
Sunshine and rain as we might,
Bare, unshaded, alone,
Lacking the shelter of thee.

O strong soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now ? For that force,
Surely, has not been left vain !
Somewhere, surely, afar,
In the sounding labor-house vast
Of being, is practised that strength,
Zealous, beneficent, firm !

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,
Conscious or not of the past,
Still thou performest the word
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live—
Prompt, unweary'd, as here !
Still thou upraisest with zeal
The humble good from the ground,
Sternly represses the bad !
Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse

Those who with half-open eyes
Tread the border-land dim
Twixt vice and virtue ; reviv'st,
Succorest !—this was thy work ;
This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life
Of mortal men on the earth ?—
Most men eddy about
Here and there—eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurl'd in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing ; and then they die—
Perish ;—and no one asks
Who or what they have been,
More than he asks what waves,
In the moonlit solitudes mild
Of the midmost Ocean, have swell'd,
Foam'd for a moment, and gone.

And there are some, whom a thirst
Ardent, unquenchable, fires,
Not with the crowd to be spent,
Not without aim to go round
In an eddy of purposeless dust,
Effort unmeaning and vain.
Ah yes ! some of us strive
Not without action to die
Fruitless, but something to snatch
From dull oblivion, nor all
Glut the devouring grave !
We, we have chosen our path—
Path to a clear-purposed goal,
Path of advance !—but it leads
A long, steep journey, through sunk
Gorges, o'er mountains in snow.
Cheerful, with friends, we set forth—
Then on the height, comes the storm.
Thunder crashes from rock
To rock, the cataracts reply,
Lightnings dazzle our eyes.
Roaring torrents have breach'd
The track, the stream-bed descends
In the place where the wayfarer once
Planted his footstep—the spray
Boils o'er its borders ! aloft
The unseen snow-beds dislodge
Their hanging ruin ; alas,
Havoc is made in our train !
Friends who set forth at our side,
Falter, are lost in the storm.
We, we only are left !
With frowning foreheads, with lips
Sternly compress'd, we strain on,
On—and at nightfall at last
Come to the end of our way,
To the lonely inn 'mid the rocks ;

Where the gaunt and taciturn host
Stands on the threshold, the wind
Shaking his thin white hairs—
Holds his lantern to scan
Our storm-beat figures, and asks :
Whom in our party we bring ?
Whom we have left in the snow ?

Sadly we answer : We bring
Only ourselves ! we lost
Sight of the rest in the storm.
Hardly ourselves we fought through,
Stripp'd, without friends, as we are,
Friends, companions, and train,
The avalanche swept from our side.

But thou would'st not *alone*
Be saved, my father ! *alone*
Conquer and come to thy goal,
Leaving the rest in the wild.
We were weary, and we
Fearful, and we in our march
Fain to drop down and to die.
Still thou turnedst, and still
Beckonedst the trembler, and still
Gavest the weary thy hand.

If, in the paths of the world,
Stones might have wounded thy feet,
Toil or dejection have tried
Thy spirit, of that we saw
Nothing—to us thou wast still
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm !
Therefore to thee it was given
Many to save with thyself ;
And, at the end of thy day,
O faithful shepherd ! to come,
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.
And through thee I believe
In the noble and great who are gone ;
Pure souls honor'd and blest
By former ages, who else—
Such, so soulless, so poor,
Is the race of men whom I see—
Seem'd but a dream of the heart,
Seem'd but a cry of desire.
Yes ! I believe that there lived
Others like thee in the past,
Not like the men of the crowd
Who all round me to-day
Bluster or cringe, and make life
Hideous, and arid, and vile ;
But souls temper'd with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good,
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God !—or sons
Shall I not call you ? because
Not as servants ye knew
Your Father's innermost mind,

His, who unwillingly sees
One of his little ones lost—
Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in its march
Fainted, and fallen, and died !

See ! In the rocks of the world
Marches the host of mankind,
A feeble, wavering line.
Where are they tending ?—A God
Marshall'd them, gave them their goal.
Ah, but the way is so long !
Years they have been in the wild !
Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,
Rising all round, overawe ;
Factions divide them, their host
Threatens to break, to dissolve.
—Ah, keep, keep them combined !
Else, of the myriads who fill
That army, not one shall arrive ;
Sole they shall stray ; in the rocks
Stagger for ever in vain.
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need
Of your fainting, dispirited race,
Ye, like angels, appear,
Radiant with ardor divine !
Beacons of hope, ye appear !
Languor is not in your heart,
Weakness is not in your word,
Weariness not on your brow.
Ye alight in our van ! at your voice,
Panic, despair, flee away.
Ye move through the ranks, recall
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
Praise, re-inspire the brave !
Order, courage, return ;
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
Follow your steps as ye go.
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
Strengthen the wavering line,
Stablish, continue our march,
On, to the bound of the waste,
On, to the City of God.

1867.

HEINE

(FROM HEINE'S GRAVE)

THE Spirit of the world,
Beholding the absurdity of men—
Their vaunts, their feats—let a sardonic
smile,
For one short moment, wander o'er his
lips.
That smile was Heine !—for its earthly
hour
The strange guest sparkled : now 'tis
pass'd away.

That was Heine ! and we,
Myriads who live, who have lived,
What are we all, but a mood,
A single mood, of the life
Of the Spirit in whom we exist,
Who alone is all things in one ?
Spirit, who fillest us all !
Spirit, who utterest in each
New-coming son of mankind
Such of thy thoughts as thou wilt !
O thou, one of whose moods,
Bitter and strange, was the life
Of Heine—his strange, alas,
His bitter life !—may a life
Other and milder be mine !
May'st thou a mood more serene,
Happier, have utter'd in mine !
May'st thou the rapture of peace
Deep have embreathed at its core ;
Made it a ray of thy thought,
Made it a beat of thy joy !

1867.

OBERMANN ONCE MORE

*Savez-vous quelque bien qui console du regret
d'un monde ?* OBERMANN.

GLION ?—Ah, twenty years, it cuts ¹
All meaning from a name !
White houses prank where once were
huts.
Glion, but not the same !

And yet I know not ! All unchanged
The turf, the pines, the sky !
The hills in their old order ranged ;
The lake, with Chillon by !

And, 'neath those chestnut-trees, where
stiff
And stony mounts the way,
The crackling husk-heaps burn, as if
I left them yesterday !

Across the valley, on that slope,
The huts of Avant shine !
Its pines, under their branches, ope
Ways for the pasturing kine.

Full-foaming milk-pails, Alpine fare,
Sweet heaps of fresh-cut grass,
Invite to rest the traveller there
Before he climb the pass—

¹ Probably all who know the Vevey end of the Lake of Geneva, will recollect Glion, the mountain-village above the castle of Chillon. Glion now has hotels, *pensions*, and villas ; but twenty years ago it was hardly more than the huts of Avant opposite to it,—huts through which goes that beautiful path over the Col de Jaman, followed by so many foot-travellers on their way from Vevey to the Simmenthal and Thun.

(Arnold).

The gentian-flower'd pass, its crown
With yellow spires aflame ;
Whence drops the path to Allière down,
And walls where Byron came.¹

By their green river, who doth change
His birth-name just below ;
Orchard, and croft, and full-stored
grange
Nursed by his pastoral flow.

But stop !—to fetch back thoughts that
stray
Beyond this gracious bound,
The cone of Jaman, pale and gray,
See, in the blue profound !

Ah, Jaman ! delicately tall
Above his sun-warm'd firs—
What thoughts to me his rocks recall,
What memories he stirs !

And who but thou must be, in truth,
Obermann ! with me here ?
Thou master of my wandering youth,
But left this many a year !

Yes, I forget the world's work wrought,
Its warfare waged with pain ;
An eremite with thee, in thought
Once more I slip my chain,

And to thy mountain-chalet come,
And lie beside its door,
And hear the wild bee's Alpine hum,
And thy sad, tranquil lore !

Again I feel the words inspire
Their mournful calm ; serene,
Yet tinged with infinite desire
For all that *might* have been—

The harmony from which man swerved
Made his life's rule once more !
The universal order served,
Earth happier than before !

—While thus I mused, night gently ran
Down over hill and wood.
Then, still and sudden, Obermann
On the grass near me stood.

Those pensive features well I knew,
On my mind, years before,
Imaged so oft ! imaged so true !
—A shepherd's garb he wore,

A mountain-flower was in his hand,
A book was in his breast.
Bent on my face, with gaze which
scann'd
My soul, his eyes did rest.

“ And is it thou,” he cried, “ so long
Held by the world which we
Loved not, who turnest from the throng
Back to thy youth and me ?

“ And from thy world, with heart op-
prest,
Choosest thou *now* to turn ?—
Ah me ! we anchorites read things best,
Clearest their course discern !

“ Thou fledst me when the ungenial
earth,
Man's work-place, lay in gloom.
Return'st thou in her hour of birth,
Of hopes and hearts in bloom ?

“ Perceiv'st thou not the change of day ?
Ah ! Carry back thy ken,
What, some two thousand years ! Sur-
vey
The world as it was then !

“ Like ours it look'd in outward air.
Its head was clear and true,
Sumptuous its clothing, rich its fare,
No pause its action knew ;

“ Stout was its arm, each thew and bone
Seem'd puissant and alive—
But, ah ! its heart, its heart was stone,
And so it could not thrive !

“ On that hard Pagan world disgust
And secret loathing fell.
Deep weariness and sated lust
Made human life a hell.

“ In his cool hall, with haggard eyes,
The Roman noble lay ;
He drove abroad, in furious guise,
Along the Appian way.

“ He made a feast, drank fierce and fast,
And crown'd his hair with flowers—
No easier nor no quicker pass'd
The impracticable hours.

“ The brooding East with awe beheld
Her impious younger world.
The Roman tempest swell'd and swell'd,
And on her head was hurl'd,

¹ Montbovon. See Byron's *Journal*, in his *Works*, vol. iii. p. 258. The river Saane becomes the Sarine below Montbovon. (*Arnold*).

"The East bow'd low before the blast
In patient, deep disdain ;
She let the legions thunder past,
And plunged in thought again.

"So well she mused, a morning broke
Across her spirit gray ;
A conquering, new-born joy awoke,
And fill'd her life with day.

"'Poor world,' she cried, 'so deep accursed,
That runn'st from pole to pole
To seek a draught to slake thy thirst—
Go, seek it in thy soul !'

"She heard it, the victorious West,
In crown and sword array'd !
She felt the void which mined her breast,
She shiver'd and obey'd.

"She veil'd her eagles, snapp'd her sword,
And laid her sceptre down ;
Her stately purple she abhorr'd,
And her imperial crown.

"She broke her flutes, she stopp'd her sports,
Her artists could not please ;
She tore her books, she shut her courts,
She fled her palaces ;

"Lust of the eye and pride of life
She left it all behind,
And hurried, torn with inward strife,
The wilderness to find.

"Tears wash'd the trouble from her face !
She changed into a child !
'Mid weeds and wrecks she stood—a place
Of ruin—but she smiled !

"Oh, had I lived in that great day,
How had its glory new
Fill'd earth and heaven, and caught away
My ravish'd spirit too !

"No thoughts that to the world belong
Had stood against the wave
Of love which set so deep and strong
From Christ's then open grave.

"No cloister-floor of humid stone
Had been too cold for me.
For me no Eastern desert lone
Had been too far to flee.

"No lonely life had pass'd too slow,
When I could hourly scan
Upon his Cross, with head sunk low,
That nail'd, thorn-crowned Man !

"Could see the Mother with her Child
Whose tender winning arts
Have to his little arms beguiled
So many wounded hearts !

"And centuries came and ran their course,
And unspent all that time
Still, still went forth that Child's dear force,
And still was at its prime.

"Ay, ages long endured his span
Of life—'tis true received—
That gracious Child, that thorn-crown'd Man !
—He lived while we believed.

"While we believed, on earth he went,
And open stood his grave.
Men call'd from chamber, church, and tent ;
And Christ was by to save.

"Now he is dead ! Far hence he lies
In the lorn Syrian town ;
And on his grave, with shining eyes,
The Syrian stars look down.

"In vain men still, with hoping new,
Regard his death-place dumb,
And say the stone is not yet to,
And wait for words to come.

"Ah, o'er that silent sacred land,
Of sun, and arid stone,
And crumbling wall, and sultry sand,
Sounds now one word alone !

*"Unduped of fancy, henceforth man
Must labor !—must resign
His all too human creeds and scan
Simply the way divine !*

"But slow that tide of common thought,
Which bathed our life, retired ;
Slow, slow the old world wore to nought,
And pulse by pulse expired.

"Its frame yet stood without a breach
When blood and warmth were fled ;
And still it spake its wonted speech—
But every word was dead.

"And oh, we cried, that on this corse
Might fall a freshening storm!
Rive its dry bones, and with new force
A new-sprung world inform!

"—Down came the storm! O'er France
it pass'd
In sheets of scathing fire;
All Europe felt that fiery blast,
And shook as it rush'd by her.

"Down came the storm! In ruins fell
The worn-out world we knew.
—It pass'd, that elemental swell!
Again appear'd the blue;

"The sun shone in the new-wash'd sky,
And what from heaven saw he?
Blocks of the past, like icebergs high,
Float on a rolling sea!

"Upon them plies the race of man
All it before endeavor'd;
'Ye live,' I cried, 'ye work and plan,
And know not ye are sever'd!

"'Poor fragments of a broken world
Whereon men pitch their tent!
Why were ye too to death not hurl'd
When your world's day was spent?

"'That glow of central fire is done
Which with its fusing flame
Knit all your parts, and kept you one—
But ye, ye are the same!

"'The past, its mask of union on,
Had ceased to live and thrive.
The past, its mask of union gone,
Say, is it more alive?

"'Your creeds are dead, your rites are
dead,
Your social order too!
Where tarries he, the Power who said:
See, I make all things new?

"'The millions suffer still, and grieve,
And what can helpers heal
With old-world cures men half believe
For woes they wholly feel?

"'And yet men have such need of joy!
But joy whose grounds are true;
And joy that should all hearts employ
As when the past was new.

"'Ah, not the emotion of that past,
Its common hope, were vain!
Some new such hope must dawn at last,
Or man must toss in pain.

"'But now the old is out of date,
The new is not yet born,
And who can be *alone* elate,
While the world lies forlorn?"

"Then to the wilderness I fled.—
There among Alpine snows
And pastoral huts I hid my head,
And sought and found repose.

"It was not yet the appointed hour.
Sad, patient, and resign'd,
I watch'd the crocus fade and flower,
I felt the sun and wind.

"The day I lived in was not mine,
Man gets no second day.
In dreams I saw the future shine—
But ah! I could not stay!

"Action I had not, followers, fame;
I pass'd obscure, alone.
The after-world forgets my name,
Nor do I wish it known.

"Composed to bear, I lived and died,
And knew my life was vain,
With fate I murmur not, nor chide.
At Sèvres by the Seine

"(If Paris that brief flight allow)
My humble tomb explore!
It bears: *Eternity, be thou
My refuge!* and no more.

"But thou, whom fellowship of mood
Did make from haunts of strife
Come to my mountain-solitude,
And learn my frustrate life;

"O thou, who, ere thy flying span
Was past of cheerful youth,
Didst find the solitary man
And love his cheerless truth—

"Despair not thou as I despair'd,
Nor be cold gloom thy prison!
Forward the gracious hours have fared,
And see! the sun is risen!

"He breaks the winter of the past;
A green, new earth appears.
Millions, whose life in ice lay fast,
Have thoughts, and smiles, and tears.

"What though there still need effort,
strife?
Though much be still unwon?
Yet warm it mounts, the hour of life!
Death's frozen hour is done!

"The world's great order dawns in
sheen,
After long darkness rude,
Divinelier imaged, clearer seen,
With happier zeal pursued.

"With hope extinct and brow composed
I mark'd the present die;
Its term of life was nearly closed,
Yet it had more than I.

"But thou, though to the world's new
hour
Thou come with aspect marr'd,
Shorn of the joy, the bloom, the power
Which best befits its bard—

"Though more than half thy years be
past,
And spent thy youthful prime;
Though, round thy firmer manhood cast
Hang weeds of our sad time

"Whereof thy youth felt all the spell,
And traversed all the shade—
Though late, though dimm'd, though
weak, yet tell
Hope to a world new-made!

"Help it to fill that deep desire,
The want which rack'd our brain,
Consumed our heart with thirst like fire,
Immedicable pain;

"Which to the wilderness drove out
Our life, to Alpine snow,

And palsied all our word with doubt,
And all our work with woe—

"What still of strength is left, employ,
This end to help attain:
*One common wave of thought and joy
Lifting mankind again!"*

—The vision ended. I awoke
As out of sleep, and no
Voice moved;—only the torrent broke
The silence, far below.

Soft darkness on the turf did lie.
Solemn, o'er hut and wood,
In the yet star-sown nightly sky,
The peak of Jaman stood.

Still in my soul the voice I heard
Of Obermann!—away
I turn'd; by some vague impulse stirr'd,
Along the rocks of Naye

Past Sonchaud's piny flanks I gaze
And the blanch'd summit bare
Of Malatrait, to where in haze
The Valais opens fair,

And the domed Velan, with his snows,
Behind the upcrowding hills,
Doth all the heavenly opening close
Which the Rhone's murmur fills;—

And glorious there, without a sound,
Across the glimmering lake,
High in the Valais-depth profound,
I saw the morning break. 1867.

ROSSETTI

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ROSSETTI

MY SISTER'S SLEEP

SHE fell asleep on Christmas Eve :
At length the long-ungranted shade
Of weary eyelids overweigh'd
The pain nought else might yet relieve.

Our mother, who had leaned all day
Over the bed from chime to chime,
Then raised herself for the first time,
And as she sat her down, did pray.

Her little work-table was spread
With work to finish. For the glare
Made by her candle, she had care
To work some distance from the bed.

Without, there was a cold moon up,
Of winter radiance sheer and thin ;
The hollow halo it was in
Was like an icy crystal cup.

Through the small room, with subtle
sound
Of flame, by vents the fireshine drove
And reddened. In its dim alcove
The mirror shed a clearness round.

I had been sitting up some nights,
And my tired mind felt weak and
blank ;
Like a sharp strengthening wine it
drank
The stillness and the broken lights.

Twelve struck. That sound, by dwindle
years
Heard in each hour, crept off ; and
then
The ruffled silence spread again,
Like water that a pebble stirs.

Our mother rose from where she sat :
Her needles, as she laid them down,
Met lightly, and her silken gown
Settled : no other noise than that.

"Glory unto the Newly Born !"
So, as said angels, she did say ;

Because we were in Christmas Day,
Though it would still be long till morn

Just then in the room over us
There was a pushing back of chairs,
As some who had sat unawares
So late, now heard the hour, and rose.

With anxious softly-stepping haste
Our mother went where Margaret lay,
Fearing the sounds o'erhead—should
they
Have broken her long watched-for rest !

She stooped an instant, calm ; and
turned ;
But suddenly turned back again ;
And all her features seemed in pain
With woe, and her eyes gazed and
yearned.

For my part, I but hid my face,
And held my breath, and spoke no
word :
There was none spoken ; but I heard
The silence for a little space.

Our mother bowed herself and wept :
And both my arms fell, and I said,
"God knows I knew that she was
dead."
And there, all white, my sister slept.

Then kneeling, upon Christmas morn
A little after twelve o'clock
We said, ere the first quarter struck,
"Christ's blessing on the newly born !"
1847. 1850.

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

THE blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven ;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even ;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,

But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still
strove

Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's
song,

Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be harkened? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on
earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?"

"When round his head the aureole
clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the
groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose
names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

'Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded ;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robcs for them
Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb :
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak :
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered
heads
Bowed with their aureoles :
And angels meeting us shall sing .
To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me :—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love, only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now.
Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,—
"All this is when he comes." She
ceased.

The light thrilled towards her, fill'd
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres :
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

1847. 1850.

AUTUMN SONG

KNOW'ST thou not at the fall of the leaf
How the heart feels a languid grief
Laid on it for a covering ;
And how sleep seems a goodly thing
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf ?

And how the swift beat of the brain
Falters because it is in vain,
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf
Knowest thou not ? and how the chief
Of joys seeras—not to suffer pain ?

Know'st thou not at the fall of the leaf
How the soul feels like a dried sheaf
Bound up at length for harvesting,
And how death seems a comely thing
In Autumn at the fall of the leaf ?

1884.¹

THE PORTRAIT

THIS is her picture as she was :
It seems a thing to wonder on,
As though mine image in the glass
Should tarry when myself am gone.
I gaze until she seems to stir,—
Until mine eyes almost avert
That now, even now, the sweet lips
part
To breathe the words of the sweet
heart :—
And yet the earth is over her.

Alas ! even such the thin-drawn ray
That makes the prison-depths more
rude,—
The drip of water night and day
Giving a tongue to solitude.
Yet only this, of love's whole prize,
Remains ; save what in mournful guise
Takes counsel with my soul alone,—
Save what is secret and unknown,
Below the earth, above the skies.

In painting her I shrined her face
Mid mystic trees, where light falls in
Hardly at all ; a covert place
Where you might think to find a din
Of doubtful talk, and a live flame
Wandering, and many a shape whose
name
Not itself knoweth, and old dew,
And your own footsteps meeting you,
And all things going as they came.

A deep dim wood : and there she stands
As in that wood that day : for so
Was the still movement of her hands
And such the pure line's gracious
flow.
And passing fair the type must seem,
Unknown the presence and the dream.
'T is she : though of herself, alas !
Less than her shadow on the grass
Or than her image in the stream.

That day we met there, I and she
One with the other, all alone ;
And we were blithe ; yet memory

¹ W. M. Rossetti classes this among the earliest poems, in date of writing. It was published as a song in 1884, and in the Poetical Works, 1886.

Saddens those hours, as when the
moon

Looks upon daylight. And with her
I stooped to drink the spring-water,
Athirst where other waters sprang;
And where the echo is, she sang,—
My soul another echo there.

But when that hour my soul won
strength

For words whose silence wastes and
kills,

Dull raindrops smote us, and at length
Thundered the heat within the hills.
That eve I spoke those words again
Beside the pelted window-pane;
And there she harkened what I said,
With under-glances that surveyed
The empty pastures blind with rain.

Next day the memories of these things,
Like leaves through which a bird has
flown,

Still vibrated with Love's warm wings;
Till I must make them all my own
And paint this picture. So, 'twixt ease
Of talk and sweet long silences,
She stood among the plants in bloom
At windows of a summer room,
To feign the shadow of the trees.

And as I wrought, while all above
And all around was fragrant air,
In the sick burthen of my love
It seemed each sun-thrilled blossom
there

Beat like a heart among the leaves.
O heart that never beats nor heaves,
In that one darkness lying still,
What now to thee my love's great will,
Or the fine web the sunshine weaves?

For now doth daylight disavow
Those days,—nought left to see or hear.
Only in solemn whispers now
At night-time these things reach mine
ear,

When the leaf-shadows at a breath
Shrink in the road, and all the heath,
Forest and water, far and wide,
In limpid starlight glorified,
Lie like the mystery of death.

Last night at last I could have slept,
And yet delayed my sleep till dawn,
Still wandering. Then it was I wept:
For unawares I came upon
Those glades where once she walked
with me:

And as I stood there suddenly,
All wan with traversing the night,
Upon the desolate verge of light
Yearned loud the iron-bosomed sea.

Even so, where Heaven holds breath and
hears

The beating heart of Love's own
breast,—

Where round the secret of all spheres
All angels lay their wings to rest,—
How shall my soul stand rapt and awed,
When, by the new birth borne abroad
Throughout the music of the suns,
It enters in her soul at once
And knows the silence there for God!

Here with her face doth memory sit
Meanwhile, and wait the day's decline,
Till other eyes shall look from it,
Eyes of the spirit's Palestine,
Even than the old gaze tenderer:
While hopes and aims long lost with her
Stand round her image side by side,
Like tombs of pilgrims that have died
About the Holy Sepulchre. 1847. 1870.

THE CARD-DEALER

COULD you not drink her gaze like wine?
Yet though its splendor swoon
Into the silence languidly
As a tune into a tune,
Those eyes unravel the coiled night
And know the stars at noon.

The gold that's heaped beside her hand,
In truth rich prize it were;
And rich the dreams that breathe her
brows
With magic stillness there;
And he were rich who should unwind
That woven golden hair.

Around her, where she sits, the dance
Now breathes its eager heat;
And not more lightly or more true
Fall there the dancers' feet
Than fall her cards on the bright board
As 'twere an heart that beat.

Her fingers let them softly through,
Smooth polished silent things;
And each one as it falls reflects
In swift light-shadowings,
Blood-red and purple, green and blue,
The great eyes of her rings.

Whom plays she with? With thee,
who lov'st

Those gems upon her hand ;
 With me, who search her secret brows ;
 With all men, bless'd or bann'd.
 We play together, she and we,
 Within a vain strange land :

A land without any order,—
 Day even as night, (one saith,)—
 Where who lieth down ariseth not
 Nor the sleeper awakeneth ;
 A land of darkness as darkness itself
 And of the shadow of death.

What be her cards, you ask ? Even
 these :—
 The heart, that doth but crave
 More, having fed ; the diamond,
 Skilled to make base seem brave ;
 The club, for smiting in the dark ;
 The spade, to dig a grave.

And do you ask what game she plays ?
 With me 'tis lost or won ;
 With thee it is playing still ; with him
 It is not well begun ;
 But 'tis a game she plays with all
 Beneath the sway o' the sun.

Thou seest the card that falls, she knows
 The card that followeth :
 Her game in thy tongue is called Life,
 As ebbs thy daily breath :
 When she shall speak, thou'lt learn her
 tongue
 And know she calls it Death. 1870.

AT THE SUNRISE IN 1848

GOD said, Let there be light ! and there
 was light.
 Then heard we sounds as though the
 Earth did sing
 And the Earth's angel cried upon the
 wing :
 We saw priests fall together and turn
 white :
 And covered in the dust from the sun's
 sight,
 A king was spied, and yet another king.
 We said : "The round world keeps its
 balancing ;
 On this globe, they and we are opposite,—
 If it is day with us, with them 'tis night.
 Still, Man, in thy just pride, remember
 this :
 Thou hadst not made that thy sons'
 sons shall ask
 What the word *king* may mean in their
 day's task,

But for the light that led : and if light is,
 It is because God said, Let there be
 light." 1848. 1886.

ON REFUSAL OF AID BETWEEN NATIONS

NOR that the earth is changing, O my
 God !
 Nor that the seasons totter in their
 walk,—
 Not that the virulent ill of act and talk
 Seethies ever as a winepress ever trod,—
 Not therefore are we certain that the rod
 Weighs in thine hand to smite thy
 world ; though now
 Beneath thine hand so many nations
 bow,
 So many kings :—not therefore, O my
 God !—
 But because Man is parcelled out in men
 To-day ; because, for any wrongful blow,
 No man not stricken asks, "I would be
 told
 Why thou dost thus ;" but his heart
 whispers then,
 "He is he, I am I." By this we know.
 That the earth falls asunder, being old.
 1848 or 1849. 1870.

MARY'S GIRLHOOD

(For a Picture)

I

THIS is that blessed Mary, pre-elect
 God's Virgin. Gone is a great while,
 and she
 Dwelt young in Nazareth of Galilee.
 Unto God's will she brought devout
 respect,
 Profound simplicity of intellect,
 And supreme patience. From her
 mother's knee
 Faithful and hopeful ; wise in charity ;
 Strong in grave peace ; in pity circum-
 spect.
 So held she through her girlhood ; as it
 were
 An angel-watered lily, that near God
 Grows and is quiet. Till, one dawn at
 home
 She woke in her white bed, and had no
 fear
 At all,—yet wept till sunshine, and felt
 awed :
 Because the fulness of the time was
 come.

II

THESE are the symbols. On that cloth
of red
I' the centre is the Tripoint: perfect each,
Except the second of its points, to teach
That Christ is not yet born. The books
—whose head
Is golden Charity, as Paul hath said—
Those virtues are wherein the soul is
rich:
Therefore on them the lily standeth,
which
Is Innocence, being interpreted.
The seven-thorn'd briar and the palm
seven-leaved
Are her great sorrow and her great
reward.
Until the end be full, the Holy One
Abides without. She soon shall have
achieved
Her perfect purity: yea, God the Lord
Shall soon vouchsafe His Son to be her
Son. 1848, 1850. 1849, 1870.

FOR A VENETIAN PASTORAL

By GIORGIONE

(In the Louvre)

WATER, for anguish of the solstice:—
nay,
But dip the vessel, slowly,—nay, but
lean
And hark how at its verge the wave
sighs in
Reluctant. Hush! Beyond all depth
away
The heat lies silent at the brink of day:
Now the hand trails upon the viol-string
That sobs, and the brown faces cease to
sing,
Sad with the whole of pleasure. Whither
stray
Her eyes now, from whose mouth the
slim pipes creep
And leave it pouting; while the shadowed
grass
Is cool against her naked side? Let be:—
Say nothing now unto her lest she weep,
Nor name this ever. Be it as it was,—
Life touching lips with Immortality.
1850.

THE SEA-LIMITS

CONSIDER the sea's listless chime:
Time's self it is, made audible,—
The murmur of the earth's own shell.

Secret continuance subline
Is the sea's end: our sight may pass
No furlong further. Since time was,
This sound hath told the lapse of time.

No quiet, which is death's,—it hath
The mournfulness of ancient life,
Enduring always at dull strife.
As the world's heart of rest and wrath,
Its painful pulse is in the sands.
Last utterly, the whole sky stands,
Gray and not known, along its path.

Listen alone beside the sea,
Listen alone among the woods;
Those voices of twin solitudes
Shall have one sound alike to thee:
Hark where the murmurs of thronged
men
Surge and sink back and surge again,—
Still the one voice of wave and tree.

Gather a shell from the strown beach
And listen at its lips: they sigh
The same desire and mystery,
The echo of the whole sea's speech.
And all mankind is thus at heart
Not anything but what thou art:
And Earth, Sea, Man, are all in each.
1850.

THE MIRROR

SHE knew it not,—most perfect pain
To learn: this too she knew not. Strife
For me, calm hers, as from the first.
'T was but another bubble burst
Upon the curdling draught of life,—
My silent patience mine again.

As who, of forms that crowd unknow'z
Within a distant mirror's shade,
Deems such an one himself, and
makes
Some sign; but when the image
shakes
No whit, he finds his thought betray'd,
And must seek elsewhere for his own.
1850, 1886.

A YOUNG FIR-WOOD

THESE little firs to-day are things
To clasp into a giant's cap,
Or fans to suit his lady's lap.
From many winters many springs
Shall cherish them in strength and sap,
Till they be marked upon the map,
A wood for the wind's wanderings

All seed is in the sower's hands :
 And what at first was trained to spread
 Its shelter for some single head,—
 Yea, even such fellowship of wands,—
 May hide the sunset, and the shade
 Of its great multitude be laid
 Upon the earth and elder sands.
November, 1850. 1870.

PENUMBRA

I DID not look upon her eyes,
 (Though scarcely seen, with no surprise,
 'Mid many eyes a single look,)
 Because they should not gaze rebuke,
 At night, from stars in sky and brook.

I did not take her by the hand,
 (Though little was to understand
 From touch of hand all friends might
 take,)
 Because it should not prove a flake
 Burnt in my palm to boil and ache.

I did not listen to her voice,
 (Though none had noted, where at choice
 All might rejoice in listening,)
 Because no such a thing should cling
 In the wood's moan at evening.

I did not cross her shadow once,
 (Though from the hollow west the sun's
 Last shadow runs along so far,)
 Because in June it should not bar
 My ways, at noon when fevers are.

They told me she was sad that day,
 (Though wherefore tell what love's sooth-
 say,
 Sooner than they, did register?)
 And my heart leapt and wept to her,
 And yet I did not speak nor stir.

So shall the tongues of the sea's foam
 (Though many voices therewith come
 From drowned hope's home to cry to
 me,)
 Bewail one hour the more, when sea
 And wind are one with memory. 1870.

SISTER HELEN

" WHY did you melt your waxen man,
 Sister Helen?
 To-day is the third since you began."
 "The time was long, yet the time ran,
 Little brother."
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 Three days to-day, between Hell and
 Heaven!)*

" But if you have done your work aright,
 Sister Helen,
 You'll let me play, for you said I might."
 "Be very still in your play to-night,
 Little brother."
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 Third night, to-night, between Hell and
 Heaven!)*

" You said it must melt ere vesper-bell,
 Sister Helen;
 If now it be molten, all is well."
 "Even so,—nay, peace! you cannot tell,
 Little brother."
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 O what is this, between Hell and Heaven?)*

" Oh the waxen knave was plump to-day,
 Sister Helen;
 How like dead folk he has dropped
 away!"
 "Nay now, of the dead what can you
 say,
 Little brother?"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 What of the dead, between Hell and
 Heaven?)*

" See, see, the sunken pile of wood,
 Sister Helen,
 Shines through the thinned wax red as
 blood!"
 "Nay now, when looked you yet on
 blood,
 Little brother?"
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 How pale she is, between Hell and
 Heaven!)*

" Now close your eyes, for they're sick
 and sore,
 Sister Helen,
 And I'll play without the gallery door."
 "Aye, let me rest,—I'll lie on the floor,
 Little brother."
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 What rest to-night, between Hell and
 Heaven?)*

" Here high up in the balcony,
 Sister Helen,
 The moon flies face to face with me."
 "Aye, look and say whatever you see,
 Little brother."
*(O Mother, Mary Mother,
 What sight to-night, between Hell and
 Heaven?)*

" Outside it's merry in the wind's wake,
 Sister Helen;

In the shaken trees the chill stars
shake."

"Hush, heard you a horse tread as you
spake,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

What sound to-night, between Hell and
Heaven?)

"I hear a horse-tread, and I see,
Sister Helen,
Three horsemen that ride terribly."

"Little brother, whence come the three,
Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Whence should they come, between Hell
and Heaven?)

"They come by the hill-verge from
Boyne Bar,

Sister Helen,

And one draws nigh, but two are afar."

"Look, look, do you know them who
they are,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Who should they be, between Hell and
Heaven?)

"Oh, it's Keith of Eastholm rides so fast,
Sister Helen,

For I know the white mane on the blast."

"The hour has come, has come at last,
Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Her hour at last, between Hell and
Heaven!)

"He has made a sign and called Halloo!
Sister Helen,

And he says that he would speak with
you."

"Oh tell him I fear the frozen dew,
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Why laughs she thus, between Hell and
Heaven!)

"The wind is loud, but I hear him cry,
Sister Helen,

That Keith of Ewern's like to die."

"And he and thou, and thou and I,
Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

And they and we, between Hell and
Heaven!)

"Three days ago, on his marriage-morn,
Sister Helen,

He sickened, and lies since then forlorn."

"For bridegroom's side is the bride a
thorn,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Cold bridal cheer, between Hell and
Heaven!)

"Three days and nights he has lain
abed,

Sister Helen,

And he prays in torment to be dead."

"The thing may chance, if he have
prayed,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

If he have prayed, between Hell and
Heaven!)

"But he has not ceased to cry to-day,

Sister Helen,

That you should take your curse away."

"My prayer was heard,—he need but
pray

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Shall God not hear, between Hell and
Heaven?)

"But he says, till you take back your
ban,

Sister Helen,

His soul would pass, yet never can."

"Nay then, shall I slay a living man,

Little brother?"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

A living soul, between Hell and Heaven!)

"But he calls for ever on your name,

Sister Helen,

And says that he melts before a flame."

"My heart for his pleasure fared the
same,

Little brother."

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Fire at the heart, between Hell and
Heaven!)

"Here's Keith of Westholm riding fast,
Sister Helen,

For I know the white plume on the
blast."

"The hour, the sweet hour I forecast,

Little brother!"

(O Mother, Mary Mother,

Is the hour sweet, between Hell and
Heaven?)

"He stops to speak, and he stills his
horse,

Sister Helen;

But his words are drowned in the wind's
course."

"Nay hear, nay hear, you must hear
perforce,

Little brother !"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What word now heard, between Hell and
Heaven ?)

"Oh he says that Keith of Ewern's cry,
Sister Helen,
Is ever to see you ere he die."

"In all that his soul sees, there am I,
Little brother !"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
The soul's one sight, between Hell and
Heaven !)

"He sends a ring and a broken coin,
Sister Helen,

And bids you mind the banks of Boyne."
"What else he broke will he ever join,
Little brother ?"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
No, never joined, between Hell and
Heaven !)

"He yields you these and craves full fain,
Sister Helen,
You pardon him in his mortal pain."

"What else he took will he give again,
Little brother ?"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Not twice to give, between Hell and
Heaven !)

"He calls your name in an agony,
Sister Helen,
That even dead Love must weep to see."

"Hate, born of Love, is blind as he,
Little brother !"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Love turned to hate, between Hell and
Heaven !)

"Oh it's Keith of Keith now that rides
fast,

Sister Helen,
For I know the white hair on the blast."
"The short, short hour will soon be past,
Little brother !"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Will soon be past, between Hell and
Heaven !)

"He looks at me and he tries to speak,
Sister Helen,

But oh ! his voice is sad and weak !"
"What here should the mighty Baron
seek,

Little brother ?"

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Is this the end, between Hell and Heaven ?)

"Oh his son still cries, if you forgive,
Sister Helen,
The body dies, but the soul shall live."

"Fire shall forgive me as I forgive,
Little brother !"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
As she forgives, between Hell and
Heaven !)

"Oh he prays you, as his heart would
rive,

Sister Helen,
To save his dear son's soul alive."
"Fire cannot slay it, it shall thrive,
Little brother !"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Alas, alas, between Hell and Heaven !)

"He cries to you, kneeling in the road,
Sister Helen,
To go with him for the love of God !"

"The way is long to his son's abode,
Little brother."
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
The way is long, between Hell and
Heaven !)

"A lady's here, by a dark steed brought,
Sister Helen,
So darkly clad, I saw her not."

"See her now or never see aught,
Little brother !"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
What more to see, between Hell and
Heaven ?)

"Her hood falls back, and the moon
shines fair,

Sister Helen,
On the Lady of Ewern's golden hair."
"Blest hour of my power and her despair,
Little brother !"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Hour blest and bann'd, between Hell and
Heaven !)

"Pale, pale her cheeks, that in pride
did glow,

Sister Helen,
'Neath the bridal-wreath three days ago."
"One morn for pride and three days for
woe.

Little brother !"
(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
Three days, three nights, between Hell
and Heaven !)

" Her clasped hands stretch from her
bending head,

Sister Helen ;

With the loud wind's wail her sobs are
wed."

" What wedding-strains hath her bridal-
bed,

Little brother ? "

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*

*What strain but death's, between Hell
and Heaven ?*)

" She may not speak, she sinks in a
swoon,

Sister Helen,

She lifts her lips and gasps on the moon."

" Oh ! might I but hear her soul's blithe
tune,

Little brother ! "

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*

*Her woe's dumb cry, between Hell and
Heaven !*)

" They've caught her to Westholm's
saddle-bow,

Sister Helen,

And her moonlit hair gleams white in
its flow."

" Let it turn whiter than winter snow,
Little brother ! "

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*

*Woe-withered gold, between Hell and
Heaven !*)

" O Sister Helen, you heard the bell,

Sister Helen !

More loud than the vesper-chime it fell."

" No vesper-chime, but a dying knell,

Little brother ! "

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*

*His dying knell, between Hell and
Heaven !*)

" Alas ! but I fear the heavy sound,

Sister Helen ;

Is it in the sky or in the ground ? "

" Say, have they turned their horses
round,

Little brother ? "

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*

*What would she more, between Hell and
Heaven ?*)

" They have raised the old man from his
knee,

Sister Helen,

And they ride in silence hastily."

" More fast the naked soul doth flee,

Little brother ! "

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*
*The naked soul, between Hell and
Heaven !*)

" Flank to flank are the three steeds
gone,

Sister Helen,

But the lady's dark steed goes alone."

" And lonely her bridegroom's soul hath
flown,

Little brother."

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*

*The lonely ghost, between Hell and
Heaven !*)

" Oh the wind is sad in the iron chill,

Sister Helen,

And weary sad they look by the hill."

" But he and I are sadder still,

Little brother ! "

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*

*Most sad of all, between Hell and
Heaven !*)

" See, see, the wax has dropped from its
place,

Sister Helen,

And the flames are winning up apace ! "

" Yet here they burn but for a space,

Little brother ! "

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*

*Here for a space, between Hell and
Heaven !*)

" Ah ! what white thing at the door has
cross'd,

Sister Helen ?

Ah ! what is this that sighs in the frost ? "

" A soul that's lost as mine is lost,

Little brother ! "

(*O Mother, Mary Mother,*

*Lost, lost, all lost, between Hell and
Heaven !*)

1853, 1870.

THE BURDEN OF NINEVEH

In our Museum galleries

To-day I lingered o'er the prize

Dead Greece vouchsafes to living eyes,—

Her Art for ever in fresh wise

From hour to hour rejoicing me.

Sighing I turned at last to win

Once more the London dirt and din ;

And as I made the swing-door spin

And issued, they were hoisting in

A wingéd beast from Nineveh.

A human face the creature wore,

And hoofs behind and hoofs before,

And flanks with dark runes fretted o'er.

'T was bull, 't was mitred Minotaur,
 A dead disbowelled mystery;
 The mummy of a buried faith
 Stark from the charnel without scathe,
 Its wings stood for the light to bathe,—
 Such fossil cerements as might swathe
 The very corpse of Nineveh.

The print of its first rush-wrapping,
 Wound ere it dried, still ribbed the
 thing.

What song did the brown maidens sing,
 From purple mouths alternating,

When that was woven languidly?

What vows, what rites, what prayers
 preferr'd.

What songs has the strange image
 heard?

In what blind vigil stood interr'd

For ages, till an English word

Broke silence first at Nineveh?

Oh when upon each sculptured court,
 Where even the wind might not re-
 sort,—

O'er which Time passed, of like import
 With the wild Arab boys at sport,—

A living face looked in to see :—

Oh seemed it not—the spell once broke—

As though the carven warriors woke,

As though the shaft the string forsook,

The cymbals clashed, the chariots shook,

And there was life in Nineveh?

On London stones our sun anew
 The beast's recovered shadow threw.
 (No shade that plague of darkness knew,
 No light, no shade, while older grew
 By ages the old earth and sea.)

Lo thou! could all thy priests have
 shown

Such proof to make thy godhead known?

From their dead Past thou liv'st alone

And still thy shadow is thine own

Even as of yore in Nineveh.

That day whereof we keep record,
 When near thy city-gates the Lord
 Sheltered his Jonah with a gourd,
 This sun, (I said) here present, pour'd

Even thus this shadow that I see.

This shadow has been shed the same

From sun and moon,—from lamps which
 came

For prayer,—from fifteen days of flame,

The last, while smouldered to a name

Sardanapalus' Nineveh.

Within thy shadow, haply, once
 Sennacherib has knelt, whose sons

Smote him between the altar-stones :
 Or pale Semiramis her zones

Of gold, her incense brought to thee,
 In love for grace, in war for aid : . . .
 Ay, and who else? . . . till 'neath thy

shade

Within his trenches newly made

Last year the Christian knelt and
 pray'd—

Not to thy strength—in Nineveh.

Now, thou poor god, within this hall
 Where the blank windows blind the wall
 From pedestal to pedestal,

The kind of light shall on thee fall

Which London takes the day to be :

While school-foundations in the act

Of holiday, three files compact,

Shall learn to view thee as a fact

Connected with that zealous tract :

"Rome,—Babylon and Nineveh."

Deemed they of this, those worshippers,
 When, in some mythic chain of verse
 Which man shall not again rehearse,
 The faces of thy ministers

Yearned pale with bitter ecstasy?

Greece, Egypt, Rome,—did any god

Before whose feet men knelt unshod

Deem that in this unblest abode

Another scarce more unknown god

Should house with him, from Nineveh?

Ah! in what quarries lay the stone
 From which this pygmy pile has grown,
 Unto man's need how long unknown,
 Since thy vast temples, court and cone,
 Rose far in desert history?

Ah! what is here that does not lie

All strange to thine awakened eye?

Ah! what is here can testify

(Save that dumb presence of the sky)

Unto thy day and Nineveh?

Why, of those mummies in the room
 Above, there might indeed have come
 One out of Egypt to thy home,
 An alien. Nay, but were not some

Of these thine own "antiquity"?

And now,—they and their gods and thou

All relics here together,—now

Whose profit? whether bull or cow,

Isis or Ibis, who or how,

Whether of Thebes or Nineveh?

The consecrated metals found,

And ivory tablets, underground,

Winged teraphim and creatures crown'd

When air and daylight filled the mound,

Fell into dust immediately.
And even as these, the images
Of awe and worship,—even as these,—
So, smitten with the sun's increase,
Her glory mouldered and did cease
From immemorial Nineveh.

The day her builders made their halt,
Those cities of the lake of salt
Stood firmly 'stablished without fault,
Made proud with pillars of basalt,
With sardonyx and porphyry.
The day that Jonah bore abroad
To Nineveh the voice of God,
A brackish lake lay in his road,
Where erst Pride fixed her sure abode,
As then in royal Nineveh.

The day when he, Pride's lord and Man's,
Showed all the kingdoms at a glance
To Him before whose countenance
The years recede, the years advance,
And said, Fall down and worship me :—
'Mid all the pomp beneath that look,
Then stirred there, haply, some rebuke,
Where to the wind the salt pools shook,
And in those tracts, of life forsook,
That knew thee not, O Nineveh !

Delicate harlot ! On thy throne
Thou with a world beneath thee prone
In state for ages sat'st alone ;
And needs were years and lustres flown
Ere strength of man could vanquish
thee :

Whom even thy victor foes must bring,
Still royal, among maids that sing
As with doves' voices, taboring
Upon their breasts, unto the King,—
A kingly conquest, Nineveh !

..... Here woke my thought. The
wind's slow sway

Had waxed ; and like the human play
Of scorn that smiling spreads away,
The sunshine shivered off the day :

The callous wind, it seemed to me,
Swept up the shadow from the ground :
And pale as whom the Fates astound,
The god forlorn stood winged and
crown'd ;

Within I knew the cry lay bound
Of the dumb soul of Nineveh.

And as I turned, my sense half shut
Still saw the crowds of kerb and rut
Go past as marshalled to the strut
Of ranks in gypsum quaintly cut.

It seemed in one same pageantry

They followed forms which had been
erst ;

To pass, till on my sight should burst
That future of the best or worst
When some may question which was
first,

Of London or of Nineveh.

For as that Bull-god once did stand
And watched the burial-clouds of sand,
Till these at last without a hand
Rose o'er his eyes, another land,

And blinded him with destiny :—
So may he stand again ; till now,
In ships of unknown sail and prow,
Some tribe of the Australian plough
Bear him afar,—a relic now
Of London, not of Nineveh !

Or it may chance indeed that when
Man's age is hoary among men,—
His centuries threescore and ten,—
His furthest childhood shall seem then
More clear than later times may be :
Who, finding in this desert place
This form, shall hold us for some race
That walked not in Christ's lowly ways,
But bowed its pride and vowed its praise
Unto the god of Nineveh.

The smile rose first,—anon drew nigh
The thought : . . . Those heavy wings
spread high

So sure of flight, which do not fly ;
That set gaze never on the sky ;
Those scripted flanks it cannot see ;
Its crown, a brow-contracting load ;
Its planted feet which trust the sod : . . .
(So grew the image as I trod :)
O Nineveh, was this thy God,—
Thine also, mighty Nineveh ? 1856.

MARY MAGDALENE

AT THE DOOR OF SIMON THE PHARISEE

(For a Drawing¹)

“ WHY wilt thou cast the roses from thine
hair ?

Nay, be thou all a rose,—wreath, lips,
and cheek.

Nay, not this house,—that banquet-
house we seek ;

See how they kiss and enter ; come thou
there.

¹ In the drawing Mary has left a festal procession, and is ascending by a sudden impulse the steps of the house where she sees Christ. Her lover has followed her and is trying to turn her back.

This delicate day of love we two will share
 Till at our ear love's whispering night shall speak.
 What, sweet one,—hold'st thou still the foolish freak?
 Nay, when I kiss thy feet they 'll leave the stair."
 "Oh loose me! See'st thou not my Bridegroom's face
 That draws me to Him? For His feet my kiss,
 My hair, my tears He craves to-day:—and oh!
 What words can tell what other day and place
 Shall see me clasp those blood-stained feet of His?
 He needs me, calls me, loves me: let me go!" 1856-7. 1870.

ASPECTA MEDUSA

(For a Drawing)

ANDROMEDA, by Perseus saved and wed,
 Hankered each day to see the Gorgon's head:
 Till o'er a fount he held it, bade her lean,
 And mirrored in the wave was safely seen
 That death she lived by.
 Let not thine eyes know
 Any forbidden thing itself, although
 It once should save as well as kill: but be
 Its shadow upon life enough for thee. 1870.

LOVE'S NOCTURN

MASTER of the murmuring courts
 Where the shapes of sleep convene!—
 Lo! my spirit here exhorts
 All the powers of thy demesne
 For their aid to woo my queen.
 What reports
 Yield thy jealous courts unseen?
 Vaporous, unaccountable,
 Dreamland lies forlorn of light,
 Hollow like a breathing shell.
 Ah! that from all dreams I might
 Choose one dream and guide its flight!
 I know well
 What her sleep should tell to-night.
 There the dreams are multitudes:
 Some that will not wait for sleep,
 Deep within the August woods;
 Some that hum while rest may steep

Weary labor laid a-heap;
 Interludes,
 Some, of grievous moods that weep.

Poets' fancies all are there:
 There the elf-girls flood with wings
 Valleys full of plaintive air;
 There breathe perfumes; there in
 rings
 Whirl the foam-bewildered springs.
 Siren there
 Winds her dizzy hair and sings.

Thence the one dream mutually
 Dreamed in bridal unison,
 Less than waking ecstasy;
 Half-formed visions that make moan
 In the house of birth alone;
 And what we,
 At death's wicket, see, unknown.

But for mine own sleep, it lies
 In one gracious form's control,
 Fair with honorable eyes,
 Lamps of a translucent soul;
 O their glance is loftiest dole,
 Sweet and wise,
 Wherein Love describes his goal.

Reft of her, my dreams are all
 Clammy trance that fears the sky:
 Changing footpaths shift and fall;
 From polluted coverts nigh,
 Miserable phantoms sigh:
 Quakes the pall,
 And the funeral goes by.

Master, is it soothly said
 That, as echoes of man's speech
 Far in secret clefts are made,
 So do all men's bodies reach
 Shadows o'er thy sunken beach,—
 Shape or shade
 In those halls portrayed of each?

Ah! might I, by thy good grace
 Groping in the windy stair,
 (Darkness and the breath of space
 Like loud waters everywhere),
 Meeting mine own image there
 Face to face,
 Send it from that place to her!

Nay, not I; but oh! do thou,
 Master, from thy shadow kind
 Call my body's phantom now:
 Bid it bear its face declin'd
 Till its flight her slumbers find,
 And her brow
 Feel its presence bow like wind.

Where in groves the gracile Spring
Trembles, with mute orison
Confidently strengthening,
Water's voice and wind's as one
Shed an echo in the sun.

Soft as Spring,
Master, bid it sing and moan.

Song shall tell how glad and strong
Is the night she soothes away ;
Moan shall grieve with that parched
tongue
Of the brazen hours of day :
Sounds as of the springtide they,
Moan and song,
While the chill months long for May.

Not the prayers which with all leave
The world's fluent woes prefer,—
Not the praise the world doth give,
Dulcet fulsome whisperer ;—
Let it yield my love to her,
And achieve
Strength that shall not grieve or err.

Wheresoe'er my dreams befall,
Both at night-watch (let it say),
And where round the sun-dial
The reluctant hours of day,
Heartless, hopeless of their way,
Rest and call ;
There her glance doth fall and stay.

Suddenly her face is there ;
So do mounting vapors wreath
Subtle-scented transports where
The black fir-wood sets its teeth.
Part the boughs and look beneath,—
Lilies share
Secret waters there, and breathe.

Master, bid my shadow bend
Whispering thus till birth of light,
Lest new shapes that sleep may send
Scatter all its work to flight ;—
Master, master of the night,
Bid it spend
Speech, song, prayer, and end aright.

Yet, ah me ! if at her head
There another phantom lean
Murmuring o'er the fragrant bed,—
Ah ! and if my spirit's queen
Smile those alien words between,—
Ah ! poor shade !
Shall it strive, or fade unseen ?

How should love's own messenger
Strive with love and be love's foe ?
Master, nay ! If thus, in her,

Sleep a wedded heart should show,—
Silent let mine image go,
Its old share
Of thy spell-bound air to know.

Like a vapor wan and mute,
Like a flame, so let it pass ;
One low sigh across her lute,
One dull breath against her glass ;
And to my sad soul, alas !
One salute
Cold as when death's foot shall pass.

Then, too, let all hopes of mine,
All vain hopes by night and day,
Slowly at thy summoning sign
Rise up pallid and obey.
Dreams, if this is thus, were they :—
Be they thine,
And to dreamworld pine away.

Yet from old time, life, not death,
Master, in thy rule is rife :
Lo ! through thee, with mingling breath,
Adam woke beside his wife,
O Love bring me so, for strife,
Force and faith,
Bring me so not death but life !

Yea, to Love himself is pour'd
This frail song of hope and fear.
Thou art Love, of one accord
With kind Sleep to bring her near,
Still-eyed, deep-eyed, ah how dear !
Master, Lord,
In her name implor'd, O hear ! 1870.

FIRST LOVE REMEMBERED

PEACE in her chamber, wheresoe'er
It be, a holy place :
The thought still brings my soul such
grace
As morning meadows wear.

Whether it still be small and light,
As maid's who dreams alone,
As from her orchard-gate the moon
Its ceiling showed at night :

Or whether, in a shadow dense
As nuptial hymns invoke,
Innocent maidenhood awoke
To married innocence :

There still the thanks unheard await
The unconscious gift bequeathed ;
For there my soul this hour has
breathed
An air inviolate. 1870.

PLIGHTED PROMISE

In a soft-complexioned sky,
 Fleeting rose and kindling gray,
 Have you seen Aurora fly
 At the break of day ?
 So my maiden, so my plighted may
 Blushing cheek and gleaming eye
 Lifts to look my way.

Where the inmost leaf is stirred
 With the heart-beat of the grove,
 Have you heard a hidden bird
 Cast her note above ?
 So my lady, so my lovely love,
 Echoing Cupid's prompted word,
 Makes a tune thereof.

Have you seen, at heaven's mid-height,
 In the moon-rack's ebb and tide,
 Venus leap forth burning white,
 Dian pale and hide ?
 So my bright breast-jewel, so my bride,
 One sweet night, when fear takes
 flight,
 Shall leap against my side. 1870.

SUDDEN LIGHT

I HAVE been here before,
 But when or how I cannot tell :
 I know the grass beyond the door,
 The sweet keen smell,
 The sighing sound, the lights around
 the shore.

You have been mine before,—
 How long ago I may not know :
 But just when at that swallow's soar
 Your neck turned so,
 Some veil did fall,—I knew it all of yore.

Has this been thus before ?
 And shall not thus time's eddying
 flight
 Still with our lives our loves restore
 In death's despite,
 And day and night yield one delight
 once more ? 1863.

THE WOODSPURGE

THE wind flapped loose, the wind was
 still,
 Shaken out dead from tree and hill :
 I had walked on at the wind's will,—
 I sat now, for the wind was still.

Between my knees my forehead was,—
 My lips, drawn in, said not Alas !

My hair was over in the grass,
 My naked ears heard the day pass.

My eyes, wide open, had the run
 Of some ten weeds to fix upon ;
 Among those few, out of the sun,
 The woodspurge flowered, three cups in
 one.

From perfect grief there need not be
 Wisdom or even memory :
 One thing then learnt remains to me,—
 The woodspurge has a cup of three. 1870.

THE HONEYSUCKLE

I PLUCKED a honeysuckle where
 The hedge on high is quick with thorn,
 And climbing for the prize, was torn,
 And fouled my feet in quag-water ;
 And by the thorns and by the wind
 The blossom that I took was thinn'd
 And yet I found it sweet and fair.

Thence to a richer growth I came,
 Where, nursed in mellow intercourse,
 The honeysuckles sprang by scores,
 Not harried like my single stem,
 All virgin lamps of scent and dew,
 So from my hand that first I threw,
 Yet plucked not any more of them. 1870.

A LITTLE WHILE

A LITTLE while a little love
 The hour yet bears for thee and me
 Who have not drawn the veil to see
 If still our heaven be lit above.
 Thou merely, at the day's last sigh,
 Hast felt thy soul prolong the tone,
 And I have heard the night-wind cry
 And deemed its speech mine own.

A little while a little love
 The scattering autumn hoards for us
 Whose bower is not yet ruinous
 Nor quite unleaved our songless grove.
 Only across the shaken boughs
 We hear the flood-tides seek the sea,
 And deep in both our hearts they rouse
 One wail for thee and me.

A little while a little love
 May yet be ours who have not said
 The word it makes our eyes afraid
 To know that each is thinking of.
 Not yet the end : be our lips dumb
 In smiles a little season yet :
 I'll tell thee, when the end is come,
 How we may best forget. 1870.

Surely thy speech shall be of her.
Thou water, O thou whispering wanderer,
What message dost thou bring?

Say, hath not Love leaned low
This hour beside thy far well-head,
And there through jealous hollowed
fingers said
The thing that most I long to know,—
Murmuring with curls all dabbled in thy
flow
And washed lips rosy red?

He told it to thee there
Where thy voice hath a louder tone;
But where it welters to this little moan
His will decrees that I should hear.
Now speak: for with the silence is no
fear,
And I am all alone.

Shall Time not still endow
One hour with life, and I and she
Slake in one kiss the thirst of memory?
Say, stream; lest Love should disavow
Thy service, and the bird upon the
bough
Sing first to tell it me.

What whisperest thou? Nay, why
Name the dead hours? I mind them
well.
Their ghosts in many darkened door-
ways dwell
With desolate eyes to know them by.
That hour must still be born ere it can
die
Of that I'd have thee tell.

But hear, before thou speak!
Withhold, I pray, the vain behest
That while the maze hath still its bower
for quest
My burning heart should cease to seek.
Be sure that Love ordained for souls
more meek
His roadside dells of rest.

Stream, when this silver thread
In flood-time is a torrent brown,
May any bulwark bind thy foaming
crown?
Shall not the waters surge and spread
And to the crannied boulders of their
bed
Still shoot the dead drift down?

Let no rebuke find place
In speech of thine: or it shall prove

That thou dost ill expound the words of
Love.
Even as thine eddy's rippling race
Would blur the perfect image of his face
I will have none thereof.

O learn and understand
That 'gainst the wrongs himself did
wreak
Love sought her aid; until her shadowy
cheek
And eyes beseeching gave command;
And compassed in her close compassion-
ate hand
My heart must burn and speak.

For then at last we spoke
What eyes so oft had told to eyes
Through that long-lingering silence
whose half-sighs
Alone the buried secret broke,
Which with snatched hands and lips' re-
verberate stroke
Then from the heart did rise.

But she is far away
Now; nor the hours of night grown
hoar
Bring yet to me, long gazing from the
door,
The wind-stirred robe of roseate gray
And rose-crown of the hour that leads
the day
When we shall meet once more.

Dark as thy blinded wave
When brimming midnight floods the
glen,—
Bright as the laughter of thy runnels
when
The dawn yields all the light they
crave;
Even so these hours to wound and that
to save
Are sisters in Love's ken.

Oh sweet her bending grace
Then when I kneel beside her feet;
And sweet her eyes' o'erhanging
heaven; and sweet
The gathering folds of her embrace;
And her fall'n hair at last shed round
my face
When breaths and tears shall meet.

Beneath her sheltering hair,
In the warm silence near her breast,
Our kisses and our sobs shall sink to rest;
As in some still trance made aware

That day and night have wrought to
fulness there
And Love has built our nest.

And as in the dim grove,
When the rains cease that hushed
them long,
'Mid glistening boughs the song-birds
wake to song,—
So from our hearts deep-shrined in
love,
While the leaves throb beneath, around,
above,
The quivering notes shall throng.

Till tenderest words found vain
Draw back to wonder mute and deep,
And closed lips in closed arms a silence
keep,
Subdued by memory's circling strain,—
The wind-rapt sound that the wind
brings again
While all the willows weep.

Then by her summoning art
Shall memory conjure back the sere
Autumnal Springs, from many a dying
year
Born dead ; and, bitter to the heart,
The very ways where now we walk apart
Who then shall cling so near.

And with each thought new-grown,
Some sweet caress or some sweet name
Low-breathed shall let me know her
thought the same :
Making me rich with every tone
And touch of the dear heaven so long
unknown
That filled my dreams with flame.

Pity and love shall burn
In her pressed cheek and cherishing
hands ;
And from the living spirit of love that
stands
Between her lips to soothe and yearn,
Each separate breath shall clasp me
round in turn
And loose my spirit's bands.

Oh passing sweet and dear,
Then when the worshipped form and
face
Are felt at length in darkling close em-
brace ;
Round which so oft the sun shone clear,
With mocking light and pitiless atmo-
sphere,
In many an hour and place

Ah me ! with what proud growth
Shall that hour's thirsting race be run ;
While, for each several sweetness still
begun
Afresh, endures love's endless drouth ;
Sweet hands, sweet hair, sweet cheeks,
sweet eyes, sweet mouth,
Each singly wooed and won.

Yet most with the sweet soul
Shall love's espousals then be knit ;
What time the governing cloud sheds
peace from it
O'er tremulous wings that touch the
goal,
And on the unmeasured height of Love's
control
The lustral fires are lit.

Therefore, when breast and cheek
Now part, from long embraces free,—
Each on the other gazing shall but see
A self that has no need to speak :
All things unsought, yet nothing more
to seek,—
One love in unity.

O water wandering past,—
Albeit to thee I speak this thing,
O water, thou that wanderest whispering,
Thou keep'st thy counsel to the last.
What spell upon thy bosom should Love
cast,
Its secret thence to wring ?

Nay, must thou hear the tale
Of the past days,—the heavy debt
Of life that obdurate time withholds,—
ere yet
To win thine ear these prayers prevail,
And by thy voice Love's self with high
All-hail
Yield up the amulet ?

How should all this be told ?—
All the sad sum of wayworn days ;—
Heart's anguish in the impenetrable
maze ;
And on the waste uncolored wold
The visible burthen of the sun grown
cold
And the moon's laboring gaze ?

Alas ! shall hope be nurs'd
On life's all-succoring breast in vain,
And made so perfect only to be slain ?
Or shall not rather the sweet thirst
Even yet rejoice the heart with warmth
dispers'd
And strength grown fair again ?

Stands it not by the door—
 Love's Hour—till she and I shall meet
 With bodiless form and unapparent feet
 That cast no shadow yet before,
 Though round its head the dawn begins
 to pour
 The breath that makes day sweet?

Its eyes invisible
 Watch till the dial's thin-thrown shade
 Be born,—yea, till the journeying line
 be laid

Upon the point that wakes the spell,
 And there in lovelier light than tongue
 can tell
 Its presence stand array'd.

Its soul remembers yet
 Those sunless hours that passed it by ;
 And still it hears the night's disconsolate cry,
 And feels the branches wringing wet
 Cast on its brow, that may not once forget,
 Dumb tears from the blind sky.

But oh ! when now her foot
 Draws near, for whose sake night and day
 Were long in weary longing sighed away,—
 The hour of Love, 'mid airs grown mute,
 Shall sing beside the door, and Love's own lute
 Thrill to the passionate lay.

Thou know'st, for Love has told
 Within thine ear, O stream, how soon
 That song shall lift its sweet appointed tune.

O tell me, for my lips are cold,
 And in my veins the blood is waxing old
 Even while I beg the boon.

So, in that hour of sighs
 Assuaged, shall we beside this stone
 Yield thanks for grace; while in thy mirror shown

The twofold image softly lies,
 Until we kiss, and each in other's eyes
 Is imaged all alone.

Still silent? Can no art
 Of Love's then move thy pity? Nay,
 To thee let nothing come that owns his sway :
 Let happy lovers have no part

With thee; nor even so sad and poor a heart
 As thou hast spurned to-day.

To-day? Lo! night is here.
 The glen grows heavy with some veil
 Risen from the earth or fall'n to make
 earth pale ;
 And all stands hushed to eye and ear,
 Until the night-wind shake the shade
 like fear
 And every covert quail.

Ah ! by another wave
 On other airs the hour must come
 Which to thy heart, my love, shall call
 me home.
 Between the lips of the low cave
 Against that night the lapping waters
 lave,
 And the dark lips are dumb.

But there Love's self doth stand,
 And with Life's weary wings far flown,
 And with Death's eyes that make the water moan,
 Gathers the water in his hand :
 And they that drink know nought of sky or land
 But only love alone.

O soul-sequestered face
 Far off,—O were that night but now !
 So even beside that stream even I and thou
 Through thirsting lips should draw
 Love's grace,
 And in the zone of that supreme embrace
 Bind aching breast and brow.

O water whispering
 Still through the dark into mine ears,—
 As with mine eyes, is it not now with hers?—
 Mine eyes that add to thy cold spring,
 Wan water, wandering water weltering,
 This hidden tide of tears. 1870.

LOVE-LILY

BETWEEN the hands, between the brows,
 Between the lips of Love-Lily,
 A spirit is born whose birth endows
 My blood with fire to burn through
 me ;
 Who breathes upon my gazing eyes,
 Who laughs and murmurs in mine ear,
 At whose least touch my color flies,
 And whom my life grows faint to hear.

Within the voice, within the heart,
 Within the mind of Love-Lily,
 A spirit is born who lifts apart
 His tremulous wings and looks at me ;
 Who on my mouth his finger lays,
 And shows, while whispering lutes
 confer,
 That Eden of Love's watered ways
 Whose winds and spirits worship her.

• Brows, hands, and lips, heart, mind,
 and voice,
 Kisses and words of Love-Lily,—
 Oh ! bid me with your joy rejoice
 Till riotous longing rest in me !
 Ah ! let not hope be still distraught,
 But find in her its gracious goal,
 Whose speech Truth knows not from
 her thought
 Nor Love her body from her soul.
 1870.

THE HOUSE OF LIFE

THE SONNET

*A Sonnet is a moment's monument,—
 Memorial from the Soul's eternity
 To one dead deathless hour. Look that
 it be,
 Whether for lustral rite or dire portent,
 Of its own arduous fulness reverent :
 Carve it in ivory or in ebony,
 As Day or Night may rule ; and let
 Time see
 Its flowering crest impearled and orient.
 A Sonnet is a coin : its face reveals
 The Soul,—its converse, to what Power
 'tis due :—
 Whether for tribute to the august appeals
 Of Life, or dower in Love's high retinue,
 It serve ; or 'mid the dark wharf's cavernous breath,
 In Charon's palm it pay the toll to
 Death.*

PART I. YOUTH AND CHANGE

I. LOVE ENTHRONED

I MARKED all kindred Powers the heart
 finds fair :—
 Truth, with awed lips ; and Hope, with
 eyes upcast ;
 And Fame, whose loud wings fan the
 ashen Past
 To signal-fires, Oblivion's flight to scare ;
 And Youth, with still some single golden
 hair

Unto his shoulder clinging, since the
 last
 Embrace wherein two sweet arms held
 him fast ;
 And Life, still wreathing flowers for
 Death to wear.
 Love's throne was not with these ; but
 far above
 All passionate wind of welcome and
 farewell
 He sat in breathless bowers they dream
 not of ;
 Though Truth foreknow Love's heart,
 and Hope foretell,
 And Fame be for Love's sake desirable,
 And Youth be dear, and Life be sweet
 to Love.

II. BRIDAL BIRTH

As when desire, long darkling, dawns,
 and first
 The mother looks upon the new-born
 child,
 Even so my Lady stood at gaze and
 smiled
 When her soul knew at length the Love
 it nurs'd.
 Born with her life, creature of poignant
 thirst
 And exquisite hunger, at her heart
 Love lay
 Quickening in darkness, till a voice that
 day
 Cried on him, and the bonds of birth
 were burst.
 Now, shadowed by his wings, our faces
 yearn
 Together, as his fullgrown feet now
 range
 The grove, and his warm hands our
 couch prepare :
 Till to his song our bodiless souls in turn
 Be born his children, when Death's nup-
 tial change
 Leaves us for light the halo of his hair.

III. LOVE'S TESTAMENT

O THOU who at Love's hour ecstatically
 Unto my heart dost ever more present,
 Clothed with his fire, thy heart his tes-
 tament ;
 Whom I have neared and felt thy breath
 to be
 The inmost incense of his sanctuary ;
 Who without speech hast owned him,
 and, intent
 Upon his will, thy life with mine hast
 blent.

And murmured, "I am thine, thou 'rt
one with me!"
O what from thee the grace, to me the
prize,
And what to Love the glory,—when the
whole
Of the deep stair thou tread'st to the
dim shoal
And weary water of the place of sighs,
And there dost work deliverance, as
thine eyes
Draw up my prisoned spirit to thy soul!

IV. LOVESIGHT

WHEN do I see thee most, beloved one?
When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
Before thy face, their altar, solemnize
The worship of that Love through thee
made known?
Or when in the dusk hours, (we two
alone,)
Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage
lies,
And my soul only sees thy soul its own?
O love, my love! if I no more should see
Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of
thee,
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,—
How then should sound upon Life's
darkening slope
The ground-whirl of the perished leaves
of Hope,
The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

V. HEART'S HOPE

By what word's power, the key of paths
untrod,
Shall I the difficult deeps of Love explore,
Till parted waves of Song yield up the
shore
Even as that sea which Israel crossed
dryshod?
For lo! in some poor rhythmic period,
Lady, I fain would tell how evermore
Thy soul I know not from thy body, nor
Thee from myself, neither our love from
God.
Yea, in God's name, and Love's, and
thine, would I
Draw from one loving heart such
evidence
As to all hearts all things shall signify;
Tender as dawn's first hill-fire, and in-
tense
As instantaneous penetrating sense,
In Spring's birth-hour, of other Springs
gone by.

VIII. LOVE'S LOVERS

SOME ladies love the jewels in Love's
zone
And gold-tipped darts he hath for pain-
less play
In idle scornful hours he flings away;
And some that listen to his lute's soft
tone
Do love to vaunt the silver praise their
own;
Some prize his blindfold sight; and
there be they
Who kissed his wings which brought
him yesterday
And thank his wings to-day that he is
flown.
My lady only loves the heart of Love:
Therefore Love's heart, my lady, hath
for thee
His bower of unimagined flower and
tree:
There kneels he now, and all-anhun-
gered of
Thine eyes gray-lit in shadowing hair
above,
Seals with thy mouth his immortality.

IX. PASSION AND WORSHIP

ONE flame-winged brought a white-
winged harp-player
Even where my lady and I lay all alone;
Saying: "Behold, this minstrel is un-
known;
Bid him depart, for I am minstrel here:
Only my strains are to Love's dear ones
dear."
Then said I: "Through thine hautboy's
rapturous tone
Unto my lady still this harp makes
moan,
And still she deems the cadence deep
and clear."
Then said my lady: "Thou art Passion
of Love,
And this Love's Worship: both he
plights to me.
Thy mastering music walks the sunlit
sea:
But where wan water trembles in the
grove
And the wan moon is all the light there-
of,
This harp still makes my name its vol-
untary."

X. THE PORTRAIT

O LORD of all compassionate control,
O Love! let this my lady's picture glow

Under my hand to praise her name, and
show
Even of her inner self the perfect whole:
That he who seeks her beauty's furthest
goal,
Beyond the light that the sweet glances
throw
And refluent wave of the sweet smile,
may know
The very sky and sea-line of her soul.
Lo! it is done. Above the enthroning
throat
The mouth's mould testifies of voice and
kiss,
The shadowed eyes remember and fore-
see.
Her face is made her shrine. Let all men
note
That in all years (O Love, thy gift is
this!)
They that would look on her must come
to me.

XI. THE LOVE-LETTER

WARMED by her hand and shadowed by
her hair
As close she leaned and poured her heart
through thee,
Whereof the articulate throbs accom-
pany
The smooth black stream that makes thy
whiteness fair,—
Sweet fluttering sheet, even of her
breath aware,—
Oh let thy silent song disclose to me
That soul wherewith her lips and eyes
agree
Like married music in Love's answering
air.
Fain had I watched her when, at some
fond thought,
Her bosom to the writing closelier
press'd,
And her breast's secrets peered into her
breast;
When, through eyes raised an instant,
her soul sought
My soul, and from the sudden confluence
caught
The words that made her love the love-
liest.

XII. THE LOVERS' WALK

SWEET twining hedgeflowers wind-stir-
red in no wise
On this June day; and hand that clings
in hand:—

Still glades; and meeting faces scarcely
fann'd:
An osier-odored stream that draws the
skies
Deep to its heart; and mirrored eyes in
eyes:—
Fresh hourly wonder o'er the Summer
land
Of light and cloud; and two souls softly
spann'd
With one o'erarching heaven of smiles
and sighs:—
Even such their path, whose bodies lean
unto
Each other's visible sweetness amor-
ously,—
Whose passionate hearts lean by Love's
high decree
Together on his heart for ever true,
As the cloud-foaming firmamental blue
Rests on the blue line of a foamless sea.

XIII. YOUTH'S ANTIPHONY

"I LOVE you, sweet: how can you ever
learn
How much I love you?" "You I love
even so,
And so I learn it." "Sweet, you can-
not know
How fair you are." "If fair enough to
earn
Your love, so much is all my love's con-
cern."
"My love grows hourly, sweet." "Mine
too doth grow,
Yet love seemed full so many hours
ago!"
Thus lovers speak, till kisses claim their
turn.
Ah! happy they to whom such words as
these
In youth have served for speech the
whole day long,
Hour after hour, remote from the world's
throng,
Work, contest, fame, all life's confe-
derate pleas,—
What while Love breathed in sighs and
silences
Through two blent souls one rapturous
undersong.

XIV. YOUTH'S SPRING-TRIBUTE

ON this sweet bank your head thrice
sweet and dear
I lay, and spread your hair on either
side,

And see the newborn woodflowers bashful-eyed
 Look through the golden tresses here and there.
 On these debateable borders of the year
 Spring's foot half falters; scarce she yet may know
 The leafless blackthorn-blossom from the snow;
 And through her bowers the wind's way still is clear.
 But April's sun strikes down the glades to-day;
 So shut your eyes upturned, and feel my kiss
 Creep, as the Spring now thrills through every spray,
 Up your warm throat to your warm lips; for this
 Is even the hour of Love's sworn suit-service,
 With whom cold hearts are counted castaway.

XV. THE BIRTH-BOND

HAVE you not noted, in some family
 Where two were born of a first marriage-bed,
 How still they own their gracious bond, though fed
 And nursed on the forgotten breast and knee?—
 How to their father's children they shall be
 In act and thought of one goodwill; but each
 Shall for the other have, in silence speech,
 And in a word complete community?
 Even so, when first I saw you, seemed it, love,
 That among souls allied to mine was yet
 One nearer kindred than life hinted of.
 O born with me somewhere that men forget,
 And though in years of sight and sound unmet,
 Known for my soul's birth-partner well enough!

XVII. BEAUTY'S PAGEANT

WHAT dawn-pulse at the heart of heaven, or last
 Incarnate flower of culminating day,—
 What marshalled marvels on the skirts of May,
 Or song full-quired, sweet June's enco-miast;

What glory of change by nature's hand amass'd
 Can vie with all those moods of varying grace
 Which o'er one loveliest woman's form and face
 Within this hour, within this room, have pass'd?
 Love's very vesture and elect disguise
 Was each fine movement,—wonder new-begot
 Of lily or swan or swan-stemmed galiot;
 Joy to his sight who now the sadlier sighs,
 Parted again, and sorrow yet for eyes
 Unborn, that read these words and saw her not.

XVIII. GENIUS IN BEAUTY

BEAUTY like hers is genius. Not the call
 Of Homer's or of Dante's heart sub-line,—
 Not Michael's hand furrowing the zones of time,—
 Is more with compassed mysteries musical;
 Nay, not in Spring's or Summer's sweet footfall
 More gathered gifts exuberant Life bequeathes
 Than doth this sovereign face, whose love-spell breathes
 Even from its shadowed contour on the wall.
 As many men are poets in their youth,
 But for one sweet-strung soul the wires prolong
 Even through all change the indomitable song;
 So in like wise the envenomed years, whose tooth
 Rends shallower grace with ruin void of ruth,
 Upon this beauty's power shall wreak no wrong.

XIX. SILENT NOON

YOUR hands lie open in the long, fresh grass,—
 The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
 Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
 'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
 All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,

Are golden kingcup-fields with silver
edge
Where the cow-parsley skirts the haw-
thorn hedge.
'T is visible silence, still as the hour-
glass.
Deep in the sun-searched growths the
dragon-fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from
the sky,—
So this wing'd hour is dropped to us
from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for death-
less dower,
This close-companioned inarticulate
hour
When twofold silence was the song of
love.

XXI. LOVE-SWEETNESS

SWEET dimness of her loosened hair's
downfall
About thy face; her sweet hands round
thy head
In gracious fostering union garlanded;
Her tremulous smiles; her glances'
sweet recall
Of love; her murmuring sighs memo-
rial;
Her mouth's culled sweetness by thy
kisses shed
On cheeks and neck and eyelids, and so
led
Back to her mouth, which answers there
for all:—
What sweeter than these things, except
the thing
In lacking which all these would lose
their sweet:—
The confident heart's still fervor: the
swift beat
And soft subsidence of the spirit's
wing,
Then when it feels, in cloud-girt way-
faring,
The breath of kindred plumes against
its feet?

XXIV. PRIDE OF YOUTH

EVEN as a child, of sorrow that we give
The dead, but little in his heart can
find,
Since without need of thought to his
clear mind
Their turn it is to die and his to live:—
Even so the winged New Love smiles to
receive

Along his eddying plumes the auroral
wind,
Nor, forward glorying, casts one look-
behind
Where night-rack shrouds the Old Love
fugitive.
There is a change in every hour's recall,
And the last cowslip in the fields we see
On the same day with the first corn-
poppy.
Alas for hourly change! Alas for all
The loves that from his hand proud
Youth lets fall,
Even as the beads of a told rosary!

XXVI. MID-RAPTURE

THOU lovely and beloved, thou my love;
Whose kiss seems still the first; whose
summoning eyes,
Even now, as for our love-world's new
sunrise,
Shed very dawn; whose voice, attuned
above
All modulation of the deep-powered
dove,
Is like a hand laid softly on the soul;
Whose hand is like a sweet voice to con-
trol
Those worn tired brows it hath the keep-
ing of:—
What word can answer to thy word—
what gaze
To thine, which now absorbs within its
sphere
My worshipping face, till I am mirrored
there
Light-circled in a heaven of deep-drawn
rays?
What clasp, what kiss mine inmost heart
can prove,
O lovely and beloved, O my love?

XXVII. HEART'S COMPASS

SOMETIMES thou seem'st not as thyself
alone,
But as the meaning of all things that
are;
A breathless wonder, shadowing forth
afar
Some heavenly solstice hushed and hal-
cyon;
Whose unstirred lips are music's visible
tone:
Whose eyes the sun-gate of the soul
unbar,
Being of its furthest fires oracular—
The evident heart of all life sown and
mown.

Even such love is; and is not thy name
 Love?
 'Yea, by thy hand the Love-god rends
 apart
 All gathering clouds of Night's ambigu-
 ous art;
 Flings them far down, and sets thine
 eyes above;
 And simply, as some gage of flower or
 glove,
 Stakes with a smile the world against
 thy heart.

XXXI. HER GIFTS

HIGH grace, the dower of queens; and
 therewithal
 Some wood-born wonder's sweet sim-
 plicity;
 A glance like water brimming with the
 sky
 Or hyacinth-light where forest-shadows
 fall;
 Such thrilling pallor of cheek as doth
 enthrall
 The heart; a mouth whose passionate
 forms imply
 All music and all silence held thereby;
 Deep golden locks, her sovereign coronal;
 A round reared neck, meet column of
 Love's shrine
 To cling to when the heart takes sanc-
 tuary;
 Hands which for ever at Love's bidding
 be,
 And soft-stirred feet still answering to
 his sign:—
 These are her gifts, as tongue may tell
 them o'er.
 Breathe low her name, my soul; for
 that means more.

XXXII. EQUAL TROTH

NOT by one measure mayst thou mete
 our love;
 For how should I be loved as I love thee?—
 I, graceless, joyless, lacking absolutely
 All gifts that with thy queenship best
 behove;—
 Thou, throned in every heart's elect al-
 cove,
 And crowned with garlands culled from
 every tree,
 Which for no head but thine, by Love's
 decree,
 All beauties and all mysteries interwove.
 But here thine eyes and lips yield soft
 rebuke:—

"Then only," (say'st thou) "could I
 love thee less,
 When thou couldst doubt my love's
 equality."
 Peace, sweet! If not to sum but worth
 we look,
 Thy heart's transcendence, not my heart's
 excess,—
 Then more a thousandfold thou lov'st
 than I.

XXXIII. VENUS VICTRIX

COULD Juno's self more sovereign pres-
 ence wear
 Than thou, 'mid other ladies throned
 in grace?—
 Or Pallas, when thou bend'st with soul-
 stilled face
 O'er poet's page gold-shadowed in thy
 hair?
 Dost thou than Venus seem less heavenly
 fair
 When o'er the sea of love's tumultuous
 trance
 Hovers thy smile, and mingles with
 thy glance
 That sweet voice like the last wave mur-
 muring there?
 Before such triune loveliness divine
 Awestruck I ask, which goddess here
 most claims
 The prize that, howsoe'er adjudged, is
 thine?
 Then Love breathes low the sweetest of
 thy names;
 And Venus Victrix to my heart doth
 bring
 Herself, the Helen of her guerdoning.

XXXIV. THE DARK GLASS

NOT I myself know all my love for thee:
 How should I reach so far, who cannot
 weigh
 To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?
 Shall birth and death, and all dark names
 that be
 As doors and windows bared to some
 loud sea,
 Lash deaf mine ears and blind my face
 with spray;
 And shall my sense pierce love,—the
 last relay
 And ultimate outpost of eternity?
 Lo! what am I to Love, the lord of all!
 One murmuring shell he gathers from
 the sand,
 One little heart-flame sheltered in his
 hand.

Yet through thine eyes he grants me
 clearest call
 And veriest touch of powers primordial
 That any hour-girt life may understand.

XL. SEVERED SELVES

Two separate divided silences,
 Which, brought together, would find
 loving voice ;
 Two glances which together would re-
 joice
 In love, now lost like stars beyond dark
 trees ;
 Two hands apart whose touch alone gives
 ease ;
 Two bosoms which, heart-shrined with
 mutual flame,
 Would, meeting in one clasp, be made
 the same ;
 Two souls, the shores wave-mocked of
 sundering seas :—
 Such are we now. Ah ! may our hope
 forecast
 Indeed one hour again, when on this
 stream
 Of darkened love once more the light
 shall gleam ?—
 An hour how slow to come, how quickly
 past,—
 Which blooms and fades, and only leaves
 at last,
 Faint as shed flowers, the attenuated
 dream.

XL. THROUGH DEATH TO LOVE

LIKE labor-laden moonclouds faint to flee
 From winds that sweep the winter-
 bitten wold,—
 Like multiiform circumfluence manifold
 Of night's flood-tide,—like terrors that
 agree
 Of hoarse-tongued fire and inarticulate
 sea,—
 Even such, within some glass dimmed
 by our breath,
 Our hearts discern wild images of Death,
 Shadows and shoals that edge eternity.
 Howbeit athwart Death's imminent
 shade doth soar
 One Power, than flow of stream or flight
 of dove
 Sweeter to glide around, to brood above.
 Tell me, my heart,—what angel-greeted
 door
 Or threshold of wing-winnowed thresh-
 ing-floor
 Hath guest fire-fledged as thine, whose
 lord is Love ?

XLVIII. DEATH-IN-LOVE

THERE came an image in Life's retinue
 That had Love's wings and bore his
 gonfalon :
 Fair was the web, and nobly wrought
 thereon,
 O soul-sequestered face, thy form and
 hue !
 Bewildering sounds, such as Spring
 wakens to,
 Shook in its folds ; and through my
 heart its power
 Sped trackless as the immemorable hour
 When birth's dark portal groaned and
 all was new.
 But a veiled woman followed, and she
 caught
 The banner round its staff, to furl and
 cling,—
 Then plucked a feather from the bearer's
 wing,
 And held it to his lips that stirred it not,
 And said to me, "Behold, there is no
 breath :
 I and this Love are one, and I am Death."

XLIX. WILLOWWOOD—I

I SAT with Love upon a woodside well,
 Leaning across the water, I and he ;
 Nor ever did he speak nor looked at me,
 But touched his lute wherein was audible
 The certain secret thing he had to tell :
 Only our mirrored eyes met silently
 In the low wave ; and that sound came
 to be
 The passionate voice I knew ; and my
 tears fell.
 And at their fall, his eyes beneath grew
 hers ;
 And with his foot and with his wing-
 feathers
 He swept the spring that watered my
 heart's drouth.
 Then the dark ripples spread to waving
 hair,
 And as I stooped, her own lips rising
 there
 Bubbled with brimming kisses at my
 mouth.

L. WILLOWWOOD—II

AND now Love sang : but his was such
 a song.
 So meshed with half-remembrance hard
 to free,
 As souls disused in death's sterility
 May sing when the new birthday tarries
 long.

And I was made aware of a dumb throng
That stood aloof, one form by every tree,
All mournful forms, for each was I or she,
The shades of those our days that had
no tongue.
They looked on us, and knew us and
were known ;
While fast together, alive from the abyss,
Clung the soul-wrung implacable close
kiss ;
And pity of self through all made
broken moan
Which said, "For once, for once, for
once alone !"
And still Love sang, and what he sang
was this :—

LII. WILLOWWOOD—III

"O YE, all ye that walk in Willowwood,
That walk with hollow faces burning
white ;
What fathom-depth of soul-struck
widowhood,
What long, what longer hours, one life-
long night,
Ere ye again, who so in vain have wooed
Your last hope lost, who so in vain invite
Your lips to that their unforgetten food,
Ere ye, ere ye again shall see the light !
Alas ! the bitter banks in Willowwood,
With tear-spurge wan, with blood-wort
burning red :
Alas ! if ever such a pillow could
Steep dead the soul in sleep till she were
dead,—
Better all life forget her than this thing,
That Willowwood should hold her wan-
dering !"

LIII. WILLOWWOOD—IV

So sang he ; and as meeting rose and
rose
Together cling through the wind's well-
away
Nor change at once, yet near the end of
day
The leaves drop loosened where the
heart-stain glows,—
So when the song died did the kiss un-
close ;
And her face fell back drowned, and was
as gray
As its gray eyes ; and if it ever may
Meet mine again I know not if Love
knows,
Only I know that I leaned low and drank
A long draught from the water where
she sank.

Her breath and all her tears and all her
soul :
And as I leaned, I know I felt Love's
face
Pressed on my neck with moan of pity
and grace,
Till both our heads were in his aureole.

LIII. WITHOUT HER

WHAT of her glass without her ? The
blank gray
There where the pool is blind of the
moon's face.
Her dress without her ? The tossed
empty space
Of cloud-rack whence the moon has
passed away.
Her paths without her ? Day's appointed
sway
Usurped by desolate night. Her pil-
lowed place
Without her ? Tears, ah me ! for love's
good grace,
And cold forgetfulness of night or day.
What of the heart without her ? Nay,
poor heart,
Of thee what word remains ere speech
be still ?
A wayfarer by barren ways and chill,
Steep ways and weary, without her thou
art,
Where the long cloud, the long wood's
counterpart,
Sheds doubled darkness up the laboring
hill.

LV. STILLBORN LOVE

THE hour which might have been yet
might not be,
Which man's and woman's heart con-
ceived and bore
Yet whereof life was barren,—on what
shore
Bides it the breaking of Time's weary
sea ?
Bondchild of all consummate joys set
free,
It somewhere sighs and serves, and
mute before
The house of Love, hears through the
echoing door
His hours elect in choral consonancy.
But lo ! what wedded souls now hand in
hand
Together tread at last the immortal
strand
With eyes where burning memory lights
love home ?

Lo! how the little outcast hour has
turned
And leaped to them and in their faces
yearned:—
“I am your child: O parents, ye have
come!”

LVI. TRUE WOMAN—I. HERSELF

To be a sweetness more desired than
Spring;
A bodily beauty more acceptable
Than the wild rose-tree's arch that
crowns the fell;
To be an essence more environing
Than wine's drained juice; a music
ravishing
More than the passionate pulse of Phil-
omel;—
To be all this 'neath one soft bosom's
swell
That is the flower of life:—how strange
a thing!
How strange a thing to be what Man
can know
But as a sacred secret! Heaven's own
screen
Hides her soul's purest depth and loveli-
est glow;
Closely withheld, as all things most un-
seen,—
The wave-bowered pearl,—the heart-
shaped seal of green
That flecks the snowdrop underneath the
snow.

LVII. TRUE WOMAN—II. HER LOVE

SHE loves him; for her infinite soul is
Love,
And he her lodestar. Passion in her is
A glass facing his fire, where the bright
bliss
Is mirrored, and the heat returned. Yet
move
That glass, a stranger's amorous flame to
prove,
And it shall turn, by instant contraries,
Ice to the moon; while her pure fire to
his
For whom it burns, clings close i' the
heart's alcove.
Lo! they are one. With wifely breast
to breast
And circling arms, she welcomes all
command
Of love,—her soul to answering ardors
fann'd:
Yet as morn springs or twilight sinks to
rest,

Ah! who shall say she deems not love-
liest
The hour of sisterly sweet hand-in-hand?

LVIII. TRUE WOMAN—III. HER HEAVEN

If to grow old in Heaven is to grow
young,
(As the Seer saw and said,) then blest
were he
With youth for evermore, whose heaven
should be
True Woman, she whom these weak
notes have sung,
Here and hereafter,—choir-strains of her
tongue,—
Sky-spaces of her eyes,—sweet signs
that flee
About her soul's immediate sanctuary,—
Were Paradise all uttermost worlds
among.
The sunrise blooms and withers on the
hill
Like any hillflower; and the noblest
troth
Dies here to dust. Yet shall Heaven's
promise clothe
Even yet those lovers who have cherished
still
This test for love:—in every kiss sealed
fast
To feel the first kiss and forbode the last.

LIX. LOVE'S LAST GIFT

LOVE to his singer held a glistening leaf,
And said: “The rose-tree and the apple-
tree
Have fruits to vaunt or flowers to lure
the bee;
And golden shafts are in the feathered
sheaf
Of the great harvest-marshal, the year's
chief,
Victorious Summer; aye, and 'neath
warm sea
Strange secret grasses lurk inviolably
Between the filtering channels of sunk
reef.
All are my blooms; and all sweet blooms
of love
To thee I gave while Spring and Summer
sang;
But Autumn stops to listen, with some
pang
From those worse things the wind is
moaning of.
Only this laurel dreads no winter days:
Take my last gift; thy heart hath sung
my praise.”

PART II. CHANGE AND FATE

LX. TRANSFIGURED LIFE

As growth of form or momentary glance
 In a child's features will recall to mind
 The father's with the mother's face combin'd,—
 Sweet interchange that memories still
 enhance:
 And yet, as childhood's years and youth's
 advance,
 The gradual mouldings leave one stamp
 behind,
 Till in the blended likeness now we find
 A separate man's or woman's countenance:—
 So in the Song, the singer's Joy and Pain,
 Its very parents, evermore expand
 To bid the passion's fullgrown birth remain,
 By Art's transfiguring essence subtly
 spann'd;
 And from that song-cloud shaped as a
 man's hand
 There comes the sound as of abundant
 rain.

LXI. THE SONG—THROE

By thine own tears thy song must tears
 beget,
 O Singer! Magic mirror thou hast none
 Except thy manifest heart; and save
 thine own
 Anguish or ardor, else no amulet.
 Cisterned in Pride, verse is the feathery
 jet
 Of soulless air-flung fountains; nay,
 more dry
 Than the Dead Sea for throats that thirst
 and sigh,
 That song o'er which no singer's lids
 grew wet.
 The Song-god—He the Sun-god—is no
 slave
 Of thine: thy Hunter he, who for thy soul
 Fledges his shaft: to no august control
 Of thy skilled hand his quivered store he
 gave:
 But if thy lips' loud cry leap to his
 smart,
 The inspir'd recoil shall pierce thy
 brother's heart.

LXV. KNOWN IN VAIN

As two whose love, first foolish, widen-
 ing scope,
 Knows suddenly, to music high and soft,

The Holy of holies; who because they
 scoff'd
 Are now amazed with shame, nor dare
 to cope
 With the whole truth aloud, lest heaven
 should ope;
 Yet, at their meetings, laugh not as they
 laugh'd
 In speech; nor speak, at length; but
 sitting oft
 Together, within hopeless sight of hope
 For hours are silent:—So it happeneth
 When Work and Will awake too late, to
 gaze
 After their life sailed by, and hold their
 breath.
 Ah! who shall dare to search through
 what sad maze
 Thenceforth their incommunicable ways
 Follow the desultory feet of Death?

LXVI. THE HEART OF THE NIGHT

FROM child to youth; from youth to
 arduous man;
 From lethargy to fever of the heart;
 From faithful life to dream-dowered
 days apart;
 From trust to doubt; from doubt to
 brink of ban;—
 Thus much of change in one swift cycle
 ran
 Till now. Alas, the soul!—how soon
 must she
 Accept her primal immortality,—
 The flesh resume its dust whence it be-
 gan?
 O Lord of work and peace! O Lord of
 life!
 O Lord, the awful Lord of will! though
 late,
 Even yet renew this soul with duteous
 breath:
 That when the peace is garnered in from
 strife,
 The work retrieved, the will regenerate,
 This soul may see thy face, O Lord of
 death!

LXVII. THE LANDMARK

WAS *that* the landmark? What—the
 foolish well
 Whose wave, low down, I did not stoop
 to drink,
 But sat and flung the pebbles from its
 brink
 In sport to send its imaged skies pell-
 mell,

(And mine own image, had I noted
well!)—
Was that my point of turning?—I had
thought
The stations of my course should rise un-
sought,
As altar-stone or ensigned citadel.
But lo! the path is missed, I must go
back,
And thirst to drink when next I reach
the spring
Which once I stained, which since may
have grown black.
Yet though no light be left nor bird now
sing
As here I turn, I'll thank God, hasten-
ing,
That the same goal is still on the same
track.

LXX. THE HILL SUMMIT

THIS feast-day of the sun, his altar there
In the broad west has blazed for vesper-
song ;
And I have loitered in the vale too long
And gaze now a belated worshipper.
Yet may I not forget that I was 'ware,
So journeying, of his face at intervals
Transfigured where the fringed horizon
falls,—
A fiery bush with coruscating hair.
And now that I have climbed and won
this height,
I must tread downward through the
sloping shade
And travel the bewildered tracks till
night.
Yet for this hour I still may here be
stayed
And see the gold air and the silver fade
And the last bird fly into the last light.

LXXI. THE CHOICE—I

EAT thou and drink; to-morrow thou
shalt die.
Surely the earth, that's wise being very
old,
Needs not our help. Then loose me,
love, and hold
Thy sultry hair up from my face; that I
May pour for thee this golden wine,
brim-high,
Till round the glass thy fingers glow
like gold.
We'll drown all hours: thy song, while
hours are toll'd,
Shall leap, as fountains veil the chang-
ing sky.

Now kiss, and think that there are really
those,
My own high-bosomed beauty, who
increase
Vain gold, vain lore, and yet might
choose our way!
Through many years they toil; then on
a day
They die not,—for their life was death,
—but cease;
And round their narrow lips the mould
falls close.

LXXII. THE CHOICE—II

WATCH thou and fear; to-morrow thou
shalt die.
Or art thou sure thou shalt have time
for death?
Is not the day which God's word promis-
eth
To come man knows not when? In
yonder sky,
Now while we speak, the sun speeds
forth: can I
Or thou assure him of his goal? God's
breath
Even at this moment haply quickeneth
The air to a flame; till spirits, always
nigh
Though screened and hid, shall walk
the daylight here.
And dost thou prate of all that man
shall do?
Canst thou, who hast but plagues, pre-
sume to be
Glad in his gladness that comes after
thee?
Will *his* strength slay *thy* worm in Hell?
Go to:
Cover thy countenance, and watch, and
fear.

LXXIII. THE CHOICE—III

THINK thou and act; to-morrow thou
shalt die.
Outstretched in the sun's warmth upon
the shore,
Thou say'st: "Man's measured path is
all gone o'er:
Up all his years, steeply, with strain
and sigh,
Man clomb until he touched the truth;
and I,
Even I, am he whom it was destined
for."
How should this be? Art thou then so
much more

Than they who sowed, that thou shouldst
 reap thereby ?
 Nay, come up hither. From this wave-
 washed mound
 Unto the furthest flood-brim look with
 me ;
 Then reach on with thy thought till it be
 drown'd.
 Miles and miles distant though the last
 line be,
 And though thy soul sail leagues and
 leagues beyond,—
 Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there
 is more sea.

LXXIV. OLD AND NEW ART—I

ST. LUKE THE PAINTER

GIVE honor unto Luke Evangelist ;
 For he it was (the aged legends say)
 Who first taught Art to fold her hands
 and pray.
 Scarcely at once she dared to rend the
 mist
 Of devious symbols ; but soon having
 wist
 How sky-breadth and field-silence and
 this day
 Are symbols also in some deeper way,
 She looked through these to God and
 was God's priest.
 And if, past noon, her toil began to irk,
 And she sought talismans, and turned
 in vain
 To soulless self-reflections of man's
 skill,—
 Yet now, in this the twilight, she might
 still
 Kneel in the latter grass to pray again,
 Ere the night cometh and she may not
 work.

LXXV. OLD AND NEW ART—II

NOT AS THESE

"I AM not as these are," the poet saith
 In youth's pride, and the painter, among
 men
 At bay, where never pencil comes nor
 pen,
 And shut about with his own frozen
 breath.
 To others, for whom only rhyme wins
 faith
 As poets,—only paint as painters,—then
 He turns in the cold silence ; and again
 Shrinking, "I am not as these are," he
 saith.
 And say that this is so, what follows it ?

For were thine eyes set backwards in
 thine head,
 Such words were well ; but they see on,
 and far.
 Unto the lights of the great Past, new-lit
 Fair for the Future's track, look thou
 instead,—
 Say thou instead, "I am not as *these*
 are."

LXXVI. OLD AND NEW ART—III

THE HUSBANDMAN

THOUGH God, as one that is an house-
 holder,
 Called these to labor in his vineyard first,
 Before the husk of darkness was well
 burst
 Bidding them grope their way out and
 bestir,
 (Who, questioned of their wages, answered, "Sir,
 Unto each man a penny :") though the
 worst
 Burthen of heat was theirs and the dry
 thirst
 Though God hath since found none such
 as these were
 To do their work like them :—Because
 of this
 Stand not ye idle in the market-place.
 Which of ye knoweth *he* is not that last
 Who may be first by faith and will ?—
 yea, his
 The hand which after the appointed
 days
 And hours shall give a Future to their
 Past ?

LXXVII. SOUL'S BEAUTY

(Sibylla Palmifera)

UNDER the arch of Life, where love and
 death,
 Terror and mystery, guard her shrine, I
 saw
 Beauty enthroned ; and though her gaze
 struck awe,
 I drew it in as simply as my breath.
 Hers are the eyes which, over and
 beneath,
 The sky and sea bend on thee,—which
 can draw,
 By sea or sky or woman, to one law,
 The allotted bondman of her palm and
 wreath.
 This is that Lady Beauty, in whose praise
 Thy voice and hand shake still ;—long
 known to thee

By flying hair and fluttering hem,—the
beat
Following her daily of thy heart and
feet,
How passionately and irretrievably,
In what fond flight, how many ways
and days!

LXXXVIII. BODY'S BEAUTY

(*Lilith*)

OF Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told
(The witch he loved before the gift of
Eve,)
That, ere the snake's, her sweet tongue
could deceive,
And her enchanted hair was the first
gold.
And still she sits, young while the earth
is old,
And, subtly of herself contemplative,
Draws men to watch the bright web
she can weave,
Till heart and body and life are in its
hold.
The rose and poppy are her flowers; for
where
Is he not found, O Lilith, whom shed
scent
And soft-shed kisses and soft sleep shall
snare?
Lo! as that youth's eyes burned at
thine, so went
Thy spell through him, and left his
straight neck bent
And round his heart one strangling
golden hair.

LXXXI. MEMORIAL THRESHOLDS

WHAT place so strange.—though unre-
vealed snow
With unimaginable fires arise
At the earth's end,—what passion of
surprise
Like frost-bound fire-girt scenes of long
ago?
Lo! this is none but I this hour; and lo!
This is the very place which to mine
eyes
Those mortal hours in vain immortalize,
'Mid hurrying crowds, with what alone
I know.
City, of thine a single simple door,
By some new Power reduplicate, must
be
Even yet my life-porch in eternity,
Even with one presence filled, as once
of yore:

Or mocking winds whirl round a chaff-
strown floor
Thee and thy years and these my words
and me.

LXXXII. HOARDED JOY

I SAID: "Nay, pluck not,—let the first
fruit be;
Even as thou sayest, it is sweet and red,
But let it ripen still. The tree's bent
head
Sees in the stream its own fecundity
And bides the day of fulness. Shall
not we
At the sun's hour that day possess the
shade,
And claim our fruit before its ripeness
fade,
And eat it from the branch and praise
the tree?"
I say: "Alas! our fruit hath wooed the
sun
Too long,—'t is fallen and floats adown
the stream.
Lo, the last clusters! Pluck them
every one,
And let us sup with summer; ere the
gleam
Of autumn set the year's pent sorrow
free,
And the woods wail like echoes from
the sea."

LXXXIII. BARREN SPRING

ONCE more the changed year's turning
wheel returns:
And as a girl sails balanced in the wind,
And now before and now again behind
Stoops as it swoops, with cheek that
laughs and burns,—
So Spring comes merry towards me here,
but earns
No answering smile from me, whose life
is twin'd
With the dead boughs that winter still
must bind,
And whom to-day the Spring no more
concerns.
Behold, this crocus is a withering flame;
This snowdrop, snow; this apple-blos-
som's part
To breed the fruit that breeds the ser-
pent's art.
Nay, for these Spring-flowers, turn thy
face from them,
Nor stay till on the year's last lily-stem
The white cup shrivels round the golden
heart.

LXXXIV. FAREWELL TO THE GLEN

SWEET stream-fed glen, why say "farewell" to thee
 Who far'st so well and find'st for ever smooth
 The brow of Time where man may read no ruth?
 Nay, do thou rather say "farewell" to me,
 Who now fare forth in bitterer fantasy
 Than erst was mine where other shade might soothe
 By other streams, what while in fragrant youth
 The bliss of being sad made melancholy.
 And yet, farewell! For better shalt thou fare
 When children bathe sweet faces in thy flow
 And happy lovers blend sweet shadows there
 In hours to come, than when an hour ago
 Thine echoes had but one man's sighs to bear
 And thy trees whispered what he feared to know.

LXXXVI. LOST DAYS

THE lost days of my life until to-day,
 What were they, could I see them on the street
 Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of wheat
 Sown once for food but trodden into clay?
 Or golden coins squandered and still to pay?
 Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?
 Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
 The undying throats of Hell, athirst alway?
 I do not see them here; but after death
 God knows I know the faces I shall see,
 Each one a murdered self, with low last breath.
 "I am thyself,—what hast thou done to me?"
 "And I—and I—thyself," (lo! each one saith,
 "And thou thyself to all eternity!")

LXXXIX. THE TREES OF THE GARDEN

YE who have passed Death's haggard hills; and ye

Whom trees that knew your sires shall cease to know
 And still stand silent:—is it all a show,—
 A wisp that laughs upon the wall?—decree
 Of some inexorable supremacy
 Which ever, as man strains his blind surmise
 From depth to ominous depth, looks past his eyes,
 Sphinx-faced with unabashed augury?
 Nay, rather question the Earth's self.
 Invoke
 The storm-felled forest-trees moss-grown to-day
 Whose roots are hillocks where the children play;
 Or ask the silver sapling 'neath what yoke
 Those stars, his spray-crown's clustering gems, shall wage
 Their journey still when his boughs shrink with age.

XC. "RETRO ME, SATHANA!"

GET thee behind me. Even as, heavy-curved,
 Stooping against the wind, a charioteer
 Is snatched from out his chariot by the hair,
 So shall Time be; and as the void car, hurled
 Abroad by reinless steeds, even so the world:
 Yea, even as chariot-dust upon the air,
 It shall be sought and not found anywhere.
 Get thee behind me, Satan. Oft unfurled,
 Thy perilous wings can beat and break like lath
 Much mightiness of men to win thee praise.
 Leave these weak feet to tread in narrow ways.
 Thou still, upon the broad vine-sheltered path,
 Mayst wait the turning of the phials of wrath
 For certain years, for certain months and days.

XCI. LOST ON BOTH SIDES

AS when two men have loved a woman well,
 Each hating each, through Love's and Death's deceit;

Since not for either this stark marriage-sheet
 And the long pauses of this wedding-bell;
 Yet o'er her grave the night and day dispel
 At last their feud forlorn, with cold and heat
 Nor other than dear friends to death may fleet
 The two lives left that most of her can tell :—
 So separate hopes, which in a soul had wooed
 The one same Peace, strove with each other long,
 And Peace before their faces perished since :
 So through that soul, in restless brotherhood,
 They roam together now, and wind among
 Its bye-streets, knocking at the dusty inns.

XCIV. MICHELANGELO'S KISS

GREAT Michelangelo, with age grown bleak
 And uttermost labors, having once o'er-said
 All grievous memories on his long life shed,
 This worst regret to one true heart could speak :—
 That when, with sorrowing love and reverence meek,
 He stooped o'er sweet Colonna's dying bed,
 His Muse and dominant Lady, spirit-wed,—
 Her hand he kissed, but not her brow or cheek.
 O Buonarrotti, — good at Art's fire-wheels
 To urge her chariot!—even thus the Soul,
 Touching at length some sorely-chastened goal,
 Earns oftenest but a little : her appeals
 Were deep and mute,—lowly her claim.
 Let be :
 What holds for her Death's garner?
 And for thee?

XCVI. LIFE THE BELOVED

As thy friend's face, with shadow of soul
 o'erspread, [hath been
 Somewhile unto thy sight perchance

Ghastly and strange, yet never so is seen
 In thought, but to all fortunate favor wed;
 As thy love's death-bound features never dead
 To memory's glass return, but contravene
 Frail fugitive days, and alway keep, I ween,
 Than all new life a livelier lovelier head :—
 So Life herself, thy spirit's friend and love,
 Even still as Spring's authentic har-binger
 Glows with fresh hours for hope to glorify;
 Though pale she lay when in the winter grove
 Her funeral flowers were snow-flakes shed on her
 And the red wings of frost-fire rent the sky.

XCVII. A SUPERScription

LOOK in my face; my name is Might-have-been;
 I am also called No-more, Too-late, Fare-well;
 Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell
 Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between :
 Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen
 Which had Life's form and Love's, but by my spell
 Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,
 Of ultimate things unuttered the frail screen.
 Mark me, how still I am! But should there dart
 One moment through thy soul the soft surprise
 Of that winged Peace which lulls the breath of sighs,—
 Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn apart
 Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart
 Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

XCIX. NEWBORN DEATH—I

TO-DAY Death seems to me an infant child
 Which her worn mother Life upon my knee
 Has set to grow my friend and play with me;
 If haply so my heart might be beguiled
 To find no terrors in a face so mild,—

If haply so my weary heart might be
 Unto the newborn milky eyes of thee,
 O Death, before resentment reconcil'd.
 How long, O Death? And shall thy feet
 depart
 Still a young child's with mine, or wilt
 thou stand
 Fullgrown the helpful daughter of my
 heart,
 What time with thee indeed I reach the
 strand
 Of the pale wave which knows thee
 what thou art,
 And drink it in the hollow of thy hand?

C. NEWBORN DEATH—II

AND thou, O Life, the lady of all bliss,
 With whom, when our first heart beat
 full and fast,
 I wandered till the haunts of men were
 pass'd,
 And in fair places found all bowers amiss
 Till only woods and waves might hear
 our kiss,
 While to the winds all thought of Death
 we cast :—
 Ah, Life! and must I have from thee at
 last
 No smile to greet me and no babe but
 this?
 Lo! Love, the child once ours; and
 Song, whose hair
 Blew like a flame and blossomed like a
 wreath;
 And Art, whose eyes were worlds by
 God found fair;
 These o'er the book of Nature mixed their
 breath
 With neck-twined arms, as oft we
 watched them there:
 And did these die that thou mightst
 bear me Death?

CI. THE ONE HOPE

WHEN vain desire at last and vain re-
 gret
 Go hand in hand to death, and all is
 vain,
 What shall assuage the unforgotten pain
 And teach the unforgetful to forget?
 Shall Peace be still a sunk stream long
 unmet,—
 Or may the soul at once in a green plain
 Stoop through the spray of some sweet
 life-fountain
 And cull the dew-drenched flowering
 amulet?

Ah! when the wan soul in that golden
 air
 Between the scripted petals softly
 blown
 Peers breathless for the gift of grace
 unknown,
 Ah! let none other alien spell soe'er
 But only the one Hope's one name be
 there,—
 Not less nor more, but even that word
 alone. 1869, 1870, 1881.¹

THE CLOUD CONFINES

THE day is dark and the night
 To him that would search their heart;
 No lips of cloud that will part
 Nor morning song in the light:
 Only, gazing alone,
 To him wild shadows are shown,
 Deep under deep unknown
 And height above unknown height.
 Still we say as we go,—
 "Strange to think by the way,
 Whatever there is to know,
 That shall we know one day."

The Past is over and fled;
 Named new, we name it the old;
 Thereof some tale hath been told,
 But no word comes from the dead;
 Whether at all they be,
 Or whether as bond or free,
 Or whether they too were we,
 Or by what spell they have sped.

Still we say as we go,—
 "Strange to think by the way,
 Whatever there is to know,
 That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of hate
 That beats in thy breast, O Time?—
 Red strife from the furthest prime,
 And anguish of fierce debate;
 War that shatters her slain,
 And peace that grinds them as grain,
 And eyes fixed ever in vain
 On the pitiless eyes of Fate.

Still we say as we go,—
 "Strange to think by the way,

¹ Sixteen Sonnets, Numbers 25, 39, 47, 49–52, 66, 65, 67, 86, 91, 97, 99, and 100, were published in the *Fortnightly Review*, 1869. Fifty Sonnets (for the exact list see W. M. Rossetti's edition of the *Collected Works*, I, 517) were published, with eleven lyrics, as "Sonnets and Songs towards a work to be entitled *The House of Life*," in the *Poems*, 1870. *The House of Life*, as it now stands, consisting of sonnets only, was published in *Ballads and Sonnets*, 1881.

Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

What of the heart of love
That bleeds in thy breast, O Man?
Thy kisses snatched 'neath the ban
Of fangs that mock them above;
Thy bells prolonged unto knells,
Thy hope that a breath dispels,
Thy bitter forlorn farewells
And the empty echoes thereof?

Still we say as we go,—
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."

The sky leans dumb on the sea,
Aweary with all its wings;
And oh! the song the sea sings
Is dark everlastingly.
Our past is clean forgot,
Our present is and is not,
Our future's a sealed seedplot,
And what betwixt them are we?—

We who say as we go,—
"Strange to think by the way,
Whatever there is to know,
That shall we know one day."
1872.

THREE SHADOWS

I LOOKED and saw your eyes
In the shadow of your hair,
As a traveller sees the stream
In the shadow of the wood;
And I said, "My faint heart sighs,
Ah me! to linger here,
To drink deep and to dream
In that sweet solitude."

I looked and saw your heart
In the shadow of your eyes,
As a seeker sees the gold
In the shadow of the stream;
And I said, "Ah me? what art
Should win the immortal prize,
Whose want must make life cold
And Heaven a hollow dream?"

I looked and saw your love
In the shadow of your heart,
As a diver sees the pearl
In the shadow of the sea;
And I murmured, not above
My breath, but all apart,—
"Ah! you can love, true girl,
And is your love for me?"
1881.

INSOMNIA

THIN are the night-skirts left behind
By daybreak hours that onward creep,
And thin, alas! the shred of sleep
That wavers with the spirit's wind:
But in half-dreams that shift and roll
And still remember and forget,
My soul this hour has drawn your soul
A little nearer yet.

Our lives, most dear, are never near,
Our thoughts are never far apart,
Though all that draws us heart to heart
Seems fainter now and now more clear.
To-night Love claims his full control,
And with desire and with regret
My soul this hour has drawn your soul
A little nearer yet.

Is there a home where heavy earth
Melts to bright air that breathes no
pain,
Where water leaves no thirst again
And springing fire is Love's new birth?
If faith long bound to one true goal
May there at length its hope beget,
My soul that hour shall draw your soul
For ever nearer yet. 1881.

CHIMES

I

Honey-flowers to the honey-comb
And the honey-bees from home.

A honey-comb and a honey-flower,
And the bee shall have his hour.

A honeyed heart for the honey-comb,
And the humming bee flies home.

A heavy heart in the honey-flower,
And the bee has had his hour.

II

A honey-cell's in the honeysuckle,
And the honey-bee knows it well.

The honey-comb has a heart of honey,
And the humming bee 's so bonny.

A honey-flower 's the honeysuckle,
And the bee 's in the honey-bell.

The honeysuckle is sucked of honey.
And the bee is heavy and bonny.

III

Brown shell first for the butterfly
And a bright wing by and by.

Butterfly, good-by to your shell,
And, bright wings, speed you well.

Bright lamplight for the butterfly
And a burnt wing by and by.

Butterfly, alas for your shell,
And, bright wings, fare you well.

IV

Lost love-labor and lullaby,
And lowly let love lie.

Lost love-morrow and love-fellow
And love's life lying low.

Lovelorn labor and life laid by
And lowly let love lie.

Late love-longing and life-sorrow
And love's life lying low.

V

Beauty's body and benison
With a bosom-flower new-blown.

Bitter beauty and blessing bann'd
With a breast to burn and brand.

Beauty's bower in the dust o'erblown
With a bare white breast of bone.

Barren beauty and bower of sand
With a blast on either hand.

VI

Buried bars in the breakwater
And bubble of the brimming weir.

Body's blood in the breakwater
And a buried body's bier.

Buried bones in the breakwater
And bubble of the brawling weir.

Bitter tears in the breakwater
And a breaking heart to bear.

VII

Hollow heaven and the hurricane
And hurry of the heavy rain.

Hurried clouds in the hollow heaven
And a heavy rain hard-driven.

The heavy rain it hurries amain
And heaven and the hurricane.

Hurrying wind o'er the heaven's hollow
And the heavy rain to follow. 1881.

SOOTHSAY

LET no man ask thee of anything
Not yearborn between Spring and
Spring.

More of all worlds than he can know,
Each day the single sun doth show,
A trustier gloss than thou canst give
From all wise scrolls demonstrative,
The sea doth sigh and the wind sing.

Let no man awe thee on any height
Of earthly kingship's mouldering might.
The dust his heel holds meet for thy
brow

Hath all of it been what both are now;
And thou and he may plague together
A beggar's eyes in some dusty weather
When none that is now knows sound or
sight.

Crave thou no dower of earthly things
Unworthy Hope's imaginings.
To have brought true birth of Song to be
And to have won hearts to Poesy,
Or anywhere in the sun or rain
To have loved and been beloved again,
Is loftiest reach of Hope's bright wings.

The wild waifs cast up by the sea
Are diverse ever seasonably.
Even so the soul-tides still may land
A different drift upon the sand.
But one the sea is evermore:
And one be still, 'twixt shore and shore,
As the sea's life, thy soul in thee.

Say, hast thou pride? How then may fit
Thy mood with flatterer's silk-spun wit?
Haply the sweet voice lifts thy crest,
A breeze of fame made manifest.
Nay, but then chaf'st at flattery? Pause:
Be sure thy wrath is not because
It makes thee feel thou lovest it.

Let thy soul strive that still the same
Be early friendship's sacred flame.
The affinities have strongest part
In youth, and draw men heart to heart:
As life wears on and finds no rest,
The individual in each breast
Is tyrannous to sunder them.

In the life-drama's stern cue-call,
A friend 's a part well-prize' by all:

And if thou meet an enemy,
What art thou that none such should be?
Even so: but if the two parts run
Into each other and grow one,
Then comes the curtain's cue to fall.

Whate'er by other's need is claimed
More than by thine,—to him unblamed
Resign it: and if he should hold
What more than he thou lack'st, bread,
gold,
Or any good whereby we live,—
To thee such substance let him give
Freely: nor he nor thou be shamed.

Strive that thy works prove equal: lest
That work which thou hast done the best
Should come to be to thee at length
(Even as to envy seems the strength
Of others) hateful and abhor'd,—
Thine own above thyself made lord,—
Of self-rebuke the bitterest.

Unto the man of yearning thought
And aspiration, to do nought
Is in itself almost an act,—
Being chasm-fire and cataract
Of the soul's utter depths unseal'd.
Yet woe to thee if once thou yield
Unto the act of doing nought!

How callous seems beyond revoke
The clock with its last listless stroke!
How much too late at length!—to trace
The hour on its forewarning face,
The thing thou hast not dared to do!...
Behold, this *may* be thus! Ere true
It prove, arise and bear thy yoke.

Let lore of all Theology
Be to thy soul what it *can* be:
But know,—the Power that fashions man
Measured not out thy little span
For thee to take the meting-rod
In turn, and so approve on God
Thy science of Theometry.

To God at best, to Chance at worst,
Give thanks for good things, last as first.
But windstrorn blossom is that good
Whose apple is not gratitude.
Even if no prayer uplift thy face,
Let the sweet right to render grace
As thy soul's cherished child be nurs'd.

Didst ever say, "Lo, I forget?"
Such thought was to remember yet.
As in a gravegarth, count to see
The monuments of memory.

Be this thy soul's appointed scope:—
Gaze onward without claim to hope,
Nor, gazing backward, court regret.
1881.

ON BURNS

In whomso'er, since Poesy began,
A Poet most of all men we may scan,
Burns of all poets is the most a Man.
1886.

FIVE ENGLISH POETS

I. THOMAS CHATTERTON

WITH Shakespeare's manhood at a boy's
wild heart,—
Through Hamlet's doubt to Shakespeare
near allied,
And kin to Milton through his Satan's
pride,—
At Death's sole door he stooped, and
craved a dart;
And to the dear new bower of England's
art,—
Even to that shrine Time else had dei-
fied.
The unuttered heart that soared against
his side,—
Drove the fell point, and smote life's
seals apart.
Thy nested home-loves, noble Chatter-
ton;
The angel-trodden stair thy soul could
trace
Up Redcliffe's spire; and in the world's
armed space
Thy gallant sword-play:—these to many
an one
Are sweet for ever; as thy grave un-
known
And love-dream of thine unrecorded
face.

II. WILLIAM BLAKE

(TO FREDERICK SHIELDS, ON HIS SKETCH OF
BLAKE'S WORK-ROOM AND DEATH-ROOM, 3 FOUNTAIN COURT, STRAND.)

THIS is the place. Even here the daunt-
less soul,
The unflinching hand, wrought on; till
in that nook,
As on that very bed, his life partook
New birth, and passed. Yon river's
dusky shoal,
Whereto the close-built coiling lanes
unroll,
Faced his work-window, whence his
eyes would stare,

Thought-wandering, unto nought that
 met them there,
 But to the unfettered irreversible goal.
 This cupboard, Holy of Holies, held the
 cloud
 Of his soul writ and limned; this other
 one,
 His true wife's charge, full oft to their
 abode
 Yielded for daily bread the martyr's
 stone,
 Ere yet their food might be that Bread
 alone,
 The words now home-speech of the
 mouth of God.

III. SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

His Soul fared forth (as from the deep
 home-grove
 The father-songster plies the hour-long
 quest,)
 To feed his soul-brood hungering in the
 nest;
 But his warm Heart, the mother-bird,
 above
 Their callow fledgling progeny still hove
 With tented roof of wings and fostering
 breast
 Till the Soul fed the soul-brood. Richly
 blest
 From Heaven their growth, whose food
 was Human Love.
 Yet ah! Like desert pools that show
 the stars
 Once in long leagues,—even such the
 scarce-snatched hours
 Which deepening pain left to his lord-
 liest powers :—
 Heaven lost through spider-trammelled
 prison-bars.
 Six years, from sixty saved! Yet kin-
 dling skies
 Own them, a beacon to our centuries.

IV. JOHN KEATS

THE weltering London ways where chil-
 dren weep
 And girls whom none call maidens
 laugh,—strange road
 Miring his outward steps, who inly
 trode
 The bright Castalian brink and Latmos'
 steep :—
 Even such his life's cross-paths; till
 deathly deep
 He toiled through sands of Lethe; and
 long pain,

Weary with labor spurned and love
 found vain,
 In dead Rome's sheltering shadow wrap-
 ped his sleep.
 O pang-dowered Poet, whose reverber-
 ant lips
 And heart-strung lyre awoke the Moon's
 eclipse,—
 Thou whom the daisies glory in grow-
 ing o'er,—
 Their fragrance clings around thy name,
 not writ
 But rumor'd in water, while the fame
 of it
 Along Time's flood goes echoing ever-
 more.

V. PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

(INSCRIPTION FOR THE COUCH, STILL PRESERVED,
 ON WHICH HE PASSED THE LAST NIGHT OF HIS
 LIFE.)

'TWIXT those twin worlds,—the world of
 Sleep, which gave
 No dream to warm,—the tidal world of
 Death,
 Which the earth's sea, as the earth, re-
 plenisheth,—
 Shelley, Song's orient sun, to breast the
 wave,
 Rose from this couch that morn. Ah!
 did he brave
 Only the sea?—or did man's deed of hell
 Engulf his bark 'mid mists impene-
 trable? . . .
 No eye discerned, nor any power might
 save.
 When that mist cleared, O Shelley!
 what dread veil
 Was rent for thee, to whom far-darkling
 Truth
 Reigned sovereign guide through thy
 brief ageless youth?
 Was the Truth *thy* Truth, Shelley?—
 Hush! All-Hail,
 Past doubt, thou gav'st it; and in
 Truth's bright sphere
 Art first of praisers, being most praised
 here. 1881.

THE KING'S TRAGEDY

JAMES I OF SCOTS.—20TH FEBRUARY,
 1487.

I CATHERINE am a Douglas born,
 A name to all Scots dear;
 And Kate Barlass they've called me now
 Through many a waning year.

This old arm's withered now. 'T was
once

Most deft 'mong maidens all
To rein the steed, to wing the shaft,
To smite the palm-play ball.

In hall adown the close-linked dance
It has shene most white and fair ;
It has been the rest for a true lord's head,
And many a sweet babe's nursing-bed,
And the bar to a King's chambère.

Aye, lasses, draw round Kate Barlass,
And hark with bated breath
How good King James, King Robert's
son,
Was foully done to death.

Through all the days of his gallant youth
The princely James was pent,
By his friends at first and then by his
foes,
In long imprisonment.

For the elder Prince, the kingdom's heir,
By treason's murderous brood
Was slain ; and the father quaked for
the child
With the royal mortal blood.

I' the Bass Rock fort, by his father's care,
Was his childhood's life assured ;
And Henry the subtle Bolingbroke,
Proud England's King, 'neath the south-
ron yoke
His youth for long years immured.

Yet in all things meet for a kingly man
Himself did he approve ;
And the nightingale through his prison-
wall
Taught him both lore and love.

For once, when the bird's song drew him
close
To the opened window-pane,
In her bowers beneath a lady stood,
A light of life to his sorrowful mood,
Like a lily amid the rain.

And for her sake, to the sweet bird's note,
He framed a sweeter Song,
More sweet than ever a poet's heart
Gave yet to the English tongue.

She was a lady of royal blood ;
And when, past sorrow and teen,
He stood where still through his crown-
less years
His Scottish realm had been,

At Scone were the happy lovers crowned,
A heart-wed King and Queen.

But the bird may fall from the bough of
youth,
And song be turned to moan,
And Love's storm-cloud be the shadow
of Hate,
When the tempest-waves of a troubled
State
Are beating against a throne.

Yet well they loved ; and the god of Love,
Whom well the King had sung,
Might find on the earth no truer hearts
His lowliest swains among.

From the days when first she rode abroad
With Scottish maids in her train,
I Catherine Douglas won the trust
Of my mistress, sweet Queen Jane.

And oft she sighed, "To be born a
King !"
And oft along the way
When she saw the homely lovers pass
She has said, "Alack the day !"

Years waned,—the loving and toiling
years :
Till England's wrong renewed
Drove James, by outrage cast on his
crown,
To the open field of feud.

'T was when the King and his host were
met
At the leaguer of Roxbro' hold,
The Queen o' the sudden sought his camp
With a tale of dread to be told.

And she showed him a secret letter writ
That spoke of treasonous strife,
And how a band of his noblest lords
Were sworn to take his life.

"And it may be here or it may be there,
In the camp or the court," she said :
"But for my sake come to your people's
arms
And guard your royal head."

Quoth he, "'T is the fifteenth day of the
siege,
And the castle 's nigh to yield."
"O face your foes on your throne," she
cried,

"And show the power you wield ;
And under your Scottish people's love
You shall sit as under your shield."

At the fair Queen's side I stood that day
 When he bade them raise the siege,
 And back to his Court he sped to know
 How the lords would meet their Liege.

But when he summoned his Parliament,
 The louring brows hung round,
 Like clouds that circle the mountain-
 head
 Ere the first low thunders sound.

For he had tamed the nobles' lust
 And curbed their power and pride,
 And reached out an arm to right the
 poor
 Through Scotland far and wide ;
 And many a lordly wrong-doer
 By the headsman's axe had died.

'T was then upspoke Sir Robert Græme,
 The bold o'ermastering man :—
 "O King, in the name of your Three
 Estates
 I set you under their ban !

"For, as your lords made oath to you
 Of service and fealty,
 Even in likewise you pledged your oath
 Their faithful sire to be :—

"Yet all we here that are nobly sprung
 Have mourned dear kith and kin
 Since first for the Scottish Barons' curse
 Did your bloody rule begin."

With that he laid his hands on his
 King :—

"Is this not so, my lords ?"
 But of all who had sworn to league with
 him
 Not one spake back to his words.

Quoth the King :—"Thou speak'st but
 for one Estate,
 Nor doth it avow thy gage.
 Let my liege lords hale this traitor
 hence !"

The Græme fired dark with rage :—
 "Who works for lesser men than himself,
 He earns but a witless wage !"

But soon from the dungeon where he lay
 He won by privy plots,
 And forth he fled with a price on his
 head
 To the country of the Wild Scots.

And word there came from Sir Robert
 Græme
 To the King at Edinbro' :—

"No Liege of mine thou art ; but I see
 From this day forth alone in thee
 God's creature, my mortal foe.

"Through thee are my wife and children
 lost,
 My heritage and lands ;
 And when my God shall show me a way,
 Thyself my mortal foe will I slay
 With these my proper hands."

Against the coming of Christmastide
 That year the King bade call
 I' the Black Friars' Charterhouse of Perth
 A solemn festival.

And we of his household rode with him
 In a close-ranked company ;
 But not till the sun had sunk from his
 throne
 Did we reach the Scottish Sea.

That eve was clenched for a boding storm,
 'Neath a toilsome moon half seen ;
 The cloud stooped low and the surf
 rose high ;
 And where there was a line of the sky,
 Wild wings loomed dark between.

And on a rock of the black beach-side,
 By the veiled moon dimly lit,
 There was something seemed to heave
 with life
 As the King drew nigh to it.

And was it only the tossing furze
 Or brake of the waste sea-wold ?
 Or was it an eagle bent to the blast ?
 When near we came, we knew it at last
 For a woman tattered and old.

But it seemed as though by a fire within
 Her writhen limbs were wrung ;
 And as soon as the King was close to her,
 She stood up gaunt and strong.

'T was then the moon sailed clear of the
 rack
 On high in her hollow dome ;
 And still as aloft with hoary crest
 Each clamorous wave rang home,
 Like fire in snow the moonlight blazed
 Amid the champing foam.

And the woman held his eyes with her
 eyes :—

"O King, thou art come at last ;
 But thy wraith has haunted the Scottish
 Sea
 To my sight for four years past.

"Four years it is since first I met,
"Twixt the Duchray and the Dhu,
A shape whose feet clung close in a
shroud,
And that shape for thine I knew.

"A year again, and on Inchkeith Isle
I saw thee pass in the breeze,
With the cerecloth risen above thy feet
And wound about thy knees.

"And yet a year, in the Links of Forth,
As a wanderer without rest,
Thou cam'st with both thine arms i'
the shroud
That clung high up thy breast.

"And in this hour I find thee here,
And well mine eyes may note
That the winding-sheet hath passed thy
breast
And risen around thy throat.

"And when I meet thee again, O King,
That of death hast such sore drouth,—
Except thou turn again on this shore,—
The winding-sheet shall have moved
once more
And covered thine eyes and mouth.

"O King, whom poor men bless for
their King,
Of thy fate be not so fain;
But these my words for God's message
take,
And turn thy steed, O King, for her sake
Who rides beside thy rein!"

While the woman spoke, the King's
horse reared
As if it would breast the sea,
And the Queen turned pale as she heard
on the gale
The voice die dolorously.

When the woman ceased, the steed was
still,
But the King gazed on her yet,
And in silence save for the wail of the sea
His eyes and her eyes met.

At last he said:—"God's ways are His
own;
Man is but shadow and dust.
Last night I prayed by His altar-stone;
To-night I wend to the feast of His Son;
And in Him I set my trust.

"I have held my people in sacred charge,
And have not feared the sting

Of proud men's hate,—to His will resign'd
Who has but one same death for a hind
And one same death for a King.

"And if God in His wisdom have brought
close
The day when I must die,
That day by water or fire or air
My feet shall fall in the destined snare
Wherever my road may lie.

"What man can say but the Fiend hath
set
Thy sorcery on my path,
My heart with the fear of death to fill,
And turn me against God's very will
To sink in His burning wrath?"

The woman stood as the train rode past,
And moved nor limb nor eye;
And when we were shipped, we saw her
there
Still standing against the sky.

As the ship made way, the moon once
more
Sank slow in her rising pall;
And I thought of the shrouded wraith
of the King,
And I said, "The Heavens know all."

And now, ye lasses, must ye hear
How my name is Kate Barlass:—
But a little thing, when all the tale
Is told of the weary mass
Of crime and woe which in Scotland's
realm
God's will let come to pass.

'T was in the Charterhouse of Perth
That the King and all his Court
Were met, the Christmas Feast being
done,
For solace and disport.

'T was a wind-wild eve in February,
And against the casement-pane
The branches smote like summoning
hands
And muttered the driving rain.

And when the wind swooped over the
lift
And made the whole heaven frown,
It seemed a grip was laid on the walls
To tug the housetop down.

And the Queen was there, more stately
fair
Than a lily in garden set;

And the king was loth to stir from her side ;
For as on the day when she was his bride,
Even so he loved her yet.

And the Earl of Athole, the King's false friend,
Sat with him at the board ;
And Robert Stuart the chamberlain
Who had sold his sovereign Lord.

Yet the traitor Christopher Chaumber there
Would fain have told him all,
And vainly four times that night he strove
To reach the King through the hall.

But the wine is bright at the goblet's brim
Though the poison lurk beneath ;
And the apples still are red on the tree
Within whose shade may the adder be
That shall turn thy life to death.

There was a knight of the King's fast friends
Whom he called the King of Love ;
And to such bright cheer and courtesy
That name might best behave.

And the King and Queen both loved him well
For his gentle knightliness ;
And with him the King, as that eve wore on,
Was playing at the chess.

And the King said, (for he thought to jest
And soothe the Queen thereby ;)—
"In a book 't is writ that this same year
A King shall in Scotland die.

"And I have pondered the matter o'er,
And this have I found, Sir Hugh,—
There are but two Kings on Scottish ground,
And those Kings are I and you.

"And I have a wife and a newborn heir,
And you are yourself alone ;
So stand you stark at my side with me
To guard our double throne.

"For here sit I and my wife and child,
As well your heart shall approve,
In full surrender and soothfastness,
Beneath your Kingdom of Love."

And the Knight laughed, and the Queen too smiled ;

But I knew her heavy thought,
And I strove to find in the good King's jest

What cheer might thence be wrought.

And I said, "My Liege, for the Queen's dear love

Now sing the song that of old
You made, when a captive Prince you lay,

And the nightingale sang sweet on the spray,

In Windsor's castle-hold."

Then he smiled the smile I knew so well
When he thought to please the Queen ;
The smile which under all bitter frowns
Of hate that rose between,
For ever dwelt at the poet's heart
Like the bird of love unseen.

And he kissed her hand and took his harp,

And the music sweetly rang ;

And when the song burst forth, it seemed

'T was the nightingale that sang.

*"Worship, ye lovers, on this May :
Of bliss your kalends are begun :
Sing with us, Away, Winter, away !
Come, Summer, the sweet season and sun !*

Awake for shame,—your heaven is won,—

*And amorously your heads lift all :
Thank Love, that you to his grace doth call !"*

But when he bent to the Queen, and sang

The speech whose praise was hers,
It seemed his voice was the voice of the Spring

And the voice of the bygone years.

*"The fairest and the freshest flower
That ever I saw before that hour,
The which o' the sudden made to start
The blood of my body to my heart.*

* * * * *

*Ah sweet, are ye a worldly creature
Or heavenly thing in form of nature ?"*

And the song was long, and richly stored
With wonder and beauteous things ;
And the harp was tuned to every change

Of minstrel ministrings;
But when he spoke of the Queen at the
last,
Its strings were his own heart-strings.

*"Unworthy but only of her grace,
Upon Love's rock that's easy and sure,
In guerdon of all my love's space
She took me her humble creature.
Thus fell my blissful adventure
In youth of love that from day to day
Flowereth aye new, and further I say.*

*"To reckon all the circumstance
As it happed when lessen gan my sore,
Of my rancor and woful chance,
It were too long,—I have done therefor.
And of this flower I say no more
But unto my help her heart hath tended
And even from death her man defended."*

"Aye, even from death," to myself I
said;
For I thought of the day when she
Had borne him the news, at Roxbro'
siege,
Of the fell confederacy.

But Death even then took aim as he sang
With an arrow deadly bright;
And the grinning skull lurked grimly
aloof,
And the wings were spread far over the
roof
More dark than the winter night.

Yet truly along the amorous song
Of Love's high pomp and state,
There were words of Fortune's trackless
doom
And the dreadful face of Fate.

And oft have I heard again in dreams
The voice of dire appeal
In which the King then sang of the pit
That is under Fortune's wheel.

*"And under the wheel beheld I there
An ugly Pit as deep as hell,
That to behold I quaked for fear:
And this I heard, that who therein fell
Came no more up, tidings to tell:
Whereat, astound of the fearful sight,
I wist not what to do for fright."*

And oft has my thought called up again
These words of the changeful song:—
"Wist thou thy pain and thy travail
To come, well might'st thou weep and
wail!"
And our wail, O God! is long.

But the song's end was all of his love;
And well his heart was grac'd
With her smiling lips and her tear-bright
eyes
As his arm went round her waist.

And on the swell of her long fair throat
Close clung the necklet-chain
As he bent her pearl-tir'd head aside,
And in the warmth of his love and pride
He kissed her lips full fain.

And her true face was a rosy red,
The very red of the rose
That, couched on the happy garden-bed,
In the summer sunlight glows.

And all the wondrous things of love
That sang so sweet through the song
Were in the look that met in their eyes,
And the look was deep and long.

'T was then a knock came at the outer
gate,
And the usher sought the King.
"The woman you met by the Scottish
Sea,
My Liege, would tell you a thing;
And she says that her present need for
speech
Will bear no gainsaying."

And the King said:—"The hour is late;
To-morrow will serve, I ween."
Then he charged the usher strictly, and
said:

"No word of this to the Queen."

But the usher came again to the King,
"Shall I call her back?" quoth he:
"For as she went on her way, she cried,
'Woe! Woe! then the thing must
be!'"

And the King paused, but he did not
speak.
Then he called for the Voidee-cup:
And as we heard the twelfth hour strike,
There by true lips and false lips alike
Was the draught of trust drained up.

So with reverence meet to King and
Queen,
To bed went all from the board;
And the last to leave of the courtly train
Was Robert Stuart the chamberlain
Who had sold his sovereign lord.

And all the locks of the chamber-door
Had the traitor riven and brast;

And that Fate might win sure way from
 afar,
 He had drawn out every bolt and bar
 That made the entrance fast.

And now at midnight he stole his way
 To the moat of the outer wall,
 And laid strong hurdles closely across
 Where the traitors' tread should fall.

But we that were the Queen's bower-
 maids
 Alone were left behind;
 And with heed we drew the curtains
 close
 Against the winter wind.

And now that all was still through the
 hall,
 More clearly we heard the rain
 That clamored ever against the glass
 And the boughs that beat on the pane.

But the fire was bright in the ingle-nook,
 And through empty space around
 The shadows cast on the arras'd wall
 'Mid the pictured kings stood sudden and
 tall
 Like spectres sprung from the ground.

And the bed was dight in a deep alcove;
 And as he stood by the fire
 The king was still in talk with the Queen
 While he doffed his goodly attire.

And the song had brought the image
 back
 Of many a bygone year;
 And many a loving word they said
 With hand in hand and head laid to
 head;
 And none of us went anear.

But Love was weeping outside the house,
 A child in the piteous rain;
 And as he watched the arrow of Death,
 He waited for his own shafts close in the
 sheath
 That never should fly again.

And now beneath the window arose
 A wild voice suddenly:
 And the King reared straight, but the
 Queen fell back
 As for bitter dule to dree;
 And all of us knew the woman's voice
 Who spoke by the Scottish Sea.

"O King," she cried, "in an evil hour
 They drove me from thy gate;

And yet my voice must rise to thine
 ears;
 But alas! it comes too late!

"Last night at mid-watch, by Aberdour,
 When the moon was dead in the skies
 O King, in a death-light of thine own
 I saw thy shape arise.

"And in full season, as erst I said,
 The doom had gained its growth;
 And the shroud had risen above thy neck
 And covered thine eyes and mouth.

"And no moon woke, but the pale dawn
 broke,
 And still thy soul stood there;
 And I thought its silence cried to my
 soul
 As the first rays crowned its hair.

"Since then have I journeyed fast and
 fain
 In very despite of Fate,
 Lest Hope might still be found in God's
 will:
 But they drove me from thy gate.

"For every man on God's ground, O
 King,
 His death grows up from his birth
 In a shadow-plant perpetually;
 And thine towers high, a black yew-
 tree,
 O'er the Charterhouse of Perth!"

That room was built far out from the
 house;
 And none but we in the room
 Might hear the voice that rose beneath,
 Nor the tread of the coming doom.

For now there came a torchlight-glare,
 And a clang of arms there came;
 And not a soul in that space but thought
 Of the foe Sir Robert Græme.

Yea, from the country of the Wild Scots,
 O'er mountain, valley, and glen,
 He had brought with him in murderous
 league
 Three hundred armed men.

The King knew all in an instant's flash,
 And like a King did he stand;
 But there was no armor in all the room,
 Nor weapon lay to his hand.

And all we women flew to the door
 And thought to have made it fast:

But the bolts were gone and the bars
were gone
And the locks were riven and brast.

And he caught the pale queen in his
arms

As the iron footsteps fell,—

Then loosed her, standing alone, and
said,

“Our bliss was our farewell!”

And ’twixt his lips he murmured a
prayer,

And he crossed his brow and breast;

And proudly in royal hardihood

Even so with folded arms he stood,—

The prize of the bloody quest.

Then on me leaped the Queen like a
deer:

“Catherine, help!” she cried.

And low at his feet we clasped his knees

Together side by side.

“Oh! even a King, for his people’s
sake,

From treasonous death must hide!”

“For *her* sake most!” I cried, and I
marked

The pang that my words would wring.

And the iron tongs from the chimney-
nook

I snatched and held to the King:—

“Wrench up the plank! and the vault
beneath

Shall yield safe harboring.”

With brows low-bent, from my eager
hand

The heavy heft did he take;

And the plank at his feet he wrenched
and tore;

And as he frowned through the open
floor,

Again I said, “For her sake!”

Then he cried to the Queen, “God’s will
be done!”

For her hands were clasped in prayer.

And down he sprang to the inner crypt;

And straight we closed the plank he had
ripp’d

And toiled to smoothe it fair

(Alas! in that vault a gap once was

Wherethro’ the King might have fled;

But three days since close-walled had it
been [therein

By his will; for the ball would roll
When without at the palm he play’d.)

Then the Queen cried, “Catherine, keep
the door,

And I to this will suffice!”

At her word I rose all dazed to my
feet,

And my heart was fire and ice.

And louder ever the voices grew,

And the tramp of men in mail;

Until to my brain it seemed to be

As though I tossed on a ship at sea

In the teeth of a crashing gale.

Then back I flew to the rest; and hard

We strove with sinews knit

To force the table against the door;

But we might not compass it.

Then my wild gaze sped far down the
hall

To the place of the hearthstone-sill;

And the Queen bent ever above the
floor,

For the plank was rising still.

And now the rush was heard on the
stair,

And “God, what help?” was our cry.

And was I frenzied or was I bold?

I looked at each empty stanchion-hold,

And no bar but my arm had I!

Like iron felt my arm, as through

The staple I made it pass:—

Alack! it was flesh and bone—no more!

’T was Catherine Douglas sprang to the
door,

But I fell back Kate Barlass.

With that they all thronged into the
hall,

Half dim to my failing ken;

And the space that was but a void before

Was a crowd of wrathful men.

Behind the door I had fall’n and lay,

Yet my sense was wildly aware,

And for all the pain of my shattered
arm

I never fainted there.

Even as I fell, my eyes were cast

Where the King leaped down to the
pit;

And lo! the plank was smooth in its
place.

And the Queen stood far from it.

And under the litters and through the
bed

And within the presses all

The traitors sought for the King, and
pierced
The arras around the wall.

And through the chamber they ramped
and stormed

Like lions loose in the lair,
And scarce could trust to their very
eyes,—
For behold ! no King was there.

Than one of them seized the Queen, and
cried,—

“Now tell us, where is thy lord?”
And he held the sharp point over her
heart: [start,

She drooped not her eyes nor did she
But she answered never a word.

Then the sword half pierced the true
true breast:

But it was the Græme's own son
Cried, “This is a woman,—we seek a
man!”

And away from her girdle-zone
He struck the point of the murderous
steel;

And that foul deed was not done.

And forth flowed all the throng like a
sea,

And 't was empty space once more;
And my eyes sought out the wounded
Queen

As I lay behind the door.

And I said: “Dear Lady, leave me here,
For I cannot help you now;
But fly while you may, and none shall
reck

Of my place here lying low.”

And she said, “My Catherine, God help
thee!”

Then she looked to the distant floor.
And clasping her hands, “Oh God help
him,”

She sobbed, “for we can no more!”

But God He knows what help may mean,
If it mean to live or to die;

And what sore sorrow and mighty moan
On earth it may cost ere yet a throne
Be filled in His house on high.

And now the ladies fled with the Queen:
And through the open door

The night-wind wailed round the empty
room

And the rushes shook on the floor.

And the bed drooped low in the dark re-
cess

Whence the arras was rent away;
And the firelight still shone over the
space

Where our hidden secret lay.

And the rain had ceased, and the moon-
beams lit

The window high in the wall,—
Bright beams that on the plank that I
knew

Through the painted pane did fall
And gleamed with the splendor of
Scotland's crown

And shield armorial.

But then a great wind swept up the skies,
And the climbing moon fell back;

And the royal blazon fled from the floor,
And nought remained on its track;

And high in the darkened window-pane
The shield and the crown were black.

And what I say next I partly saw

And partly I heard in sooth,
And partly since from the murderers'
lips

The torture wrung the truth.

For now again came the arméd tread

And fast through the hall it fell;
But the throng was less; and ere I saw,

By the voice without I could tell
That Robert Stuart had come with them
Who knew that chamber well.

And over the space the Græme strode
dark

With his mantle round him flung;
And in his eye was a flaming light
But not a word on his tongue.

And Stuart held a torch to the floor,
And he found the thing he sought;
And they slashed the plank away with
their swords;

And O God ! I fainted not !

And the traitor held his torch in the gap,
All smoking and smouldering;

And through the vapor and fire, beneath
In the dark crypt's narrow ring,

With a shout that pealed to the room's
high roof

They saw their naked King.

Half naked he stood, but stood as one
Who yet could do and dare:

With the crown, the King was stript
away,—
The Knight was reft of his battle-
array,—
But still the Man was there.

From the rout then stepped a villain
forth,—
Sir John Hall was his name ;
With a knife unsheathed he leapt to the
vault
Beneath the torchlight-flame.

Of his person and stature was the King
A man right manly strong,
And mightily by the shoulder-blades
His foe to his feet he flung.

Then the traitor's brother, Sir Thomas
Hall,
Sprang down to work his worst ;
And the King caught the second man
by the neck
And flung him above the first.

And he smote and trampled them
under him ;
And a long month thence they bare
All black their throats with the grip of
his hands
When the hangman's hand came there.

And sore he strove to have had their
knives,
But the sharp blades gashed his hands.
Oh James ! so armed, thou hadst battled
there
Till help had come of thy bands ;
And oh ! once more thou hadst held our
throne
And ruled thy Scottish lands !

But while the King o'er his foes still
raged
With a heart that nought could tame,
Another man sprang down to the crypt ;
And with his sword in his hand hard-
gripp'd
There stood Sir Robert Græme.

(Now shame on the recreant traitor's
heart
Who durst not face his King
Till the body unarmed was wearied out
With two-fold combating !

Ah ! well might the people sing and say,
As oft ye have heard aright :—
" O Robert Græme, O Robert Græme.

*Who slew our King, God give thee
shame ! "*
For he slew him not as a knight.)

And the naked King turned round at bay,
But his strength had passed the goal,
And he could but gasp :—" Mine hour is
come ;
But oh ! to succor thine own soul's
doom,
Let a priest now shrive my soul ! "

And the traitor looked on the King's
spent strength,
And said :—" Have I kept my word ?—
Yea, King, the mortal pledge that I
gave ?
No black friar's shrift thy soul shall save,
But the shrift of this red sword ! "

With that he smote his King through
the breast ;
And all they three in that pen
Fell on him and stabbed and stabbed him
there
Like merciless murderous men.

Yet seemed it now that Sir Robert
Græme,
Ere the King's last breath was o'er,
Turned sick at heart with the deadly
sight
And would have done no more.

But a cry came from the troop above :
" If him thou dost not slay,
The price of his life that thou dost spare
Thy forfeit life shall pay ! "

O God ! what more did I hear or see,
Or how should I tell the rest ?
But there at length our King lay slain
With sixteen wounds in his breast.

O God ! and now did a bell boom forth,
And the murderers turned and fled ;—
Too late, too late, O God, did it sound !—
And I heard the true men mustering
round,
And the cries and the coming tread.

But ere they came to the black death-
gap
Somewise did I creep and steal ;
And lo ! or ever I swooned away,
Through the dusk I saw where the white
face lay
In the Pit of Fortune's Wheel.

And now, ye Scottish maids who have
heard

Dread things of the days grown old,—
Even at the last, of true Queen Jane
May somewhat yet be told,
And how she dealt for her dear lord's sake
Dire vengeance manifold.

'T was in the Charterhouse of Perth,
In the fair-lit Death-chapelle,
That the slain King's corpse on bier was
lain

With chant and requiem-knell.

And all with royal wealth of balm
Was the body purified:
And none could trace on the brow and
lips
The death that he had died.

In his robes of state he lay asleep
With orb and sceptre in hand;
And by the crown he wore on his throne
Was his kingly forehead spann'd.

And, girls, 't was a sweet sad thing to see
How the curling golden hair,
As in the day of the poet's youth,
From the King's crown clustered there.

And if all had come to pass in the brain
That throbbed beneath those curls,
Then Scots had said in the days to come
That this their soil was a different home
And a different Scotland, girls!

And the Queen sat by him night and day,
And oft she knelt in prayer,
All wan and pale in the widow's veil
That shrouded her shining hair.

And I had got good help of my hurt:
And only to me some sign
She made; and save the priests that
were there
No face would she see but mine.

And the month of March wore on apace;
And now fresh couriers fared
Still from the country of the Wild Scots
With news of the traitors snared.

And still as I told her day by day,
Her pallor changed to sight,

And the frost grew to a furnace-flame
That burnt her visage white.

And evermore as I brought her word,
She bent to her dead King James,
And in the cold ear with fire-drawn
breath
She spoke the traitors' names.

But when the name of Sir Robert Græme
Was the one she had to give,
I ran to hold her up from the floor;
For the froth was on her lips, and sore
I feared that she could not live.

And the month of March wore nigh to
its end,
And still was the death-pall spread;
For she would not bury her slaughtered
lord
Till his slayers all were dead.

And now of their dooms dread tidings
came,
And of torments fierce and dire;
And nought she spake,—she had ceased
to speak,—
But her eyes were a soul on fire.

But when I told her the bitter end
Of the stern and just award,
She leaned o'er the bier, and thrice
three times
She kissed the lips of her lord.

And then she said,—“My King, they are
dead!”
And she knelt on the chapel-floor,
And whispered low with a strange proud
smile,—
“James, James, they suffered more!”

Last she stood up to her queenly height,
But she shook like an autumn leaf,
As though the fire wherein she burned
Then left her body, and all were turned
To winter of life-long grief.

And “O James!” she said,—“My
James!” she said.—
“Alas for the woful thing,
That a poet true and a friend of man,
In desperate days of bale and ban,
Should needs be born a King!” 1881.

MORRIS

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MORRIS

WINTER WEATHER

WE rode together
 In the winter weather
 To the broad mead under the hill;
 Though the skies did shiver
 With the cold, the river
 Ran, and was never still.

 No cloud did darken
 The night; we did harken
 The hound's bark far away.
 It was solemn midnight
 In that dread, dread night,
 In the years that have pass'd for aye.

 Two rode beside me,
 My banner did hide me,
 As it drooped adown from my lance;
 With its deep blue trapping,
 The mail over-lapping,
 My gallant horse did prance.

So ever together
 In the sparkling weather
 Moved my banner and lance;
 And its laurel trapping,
 The steel over-lapping,
 The stars saw quiver and dance.

We met together
 In the winter weather
 By the town-walls under the hill;
 His mail rings came clinking,
 They broke on my thinking,
 For the night was hush'd and still.

Two rode beside him,
 His banner did hide him,
 As it drooped down straight from his
 lance;
 With its blood-red trapping,
 The mail over-lapping,
 His mighty horse did prance.

Down rain'd the buds of the dear spring
weather,
The elm-tree flowers fell like tears.

There, as we roll'd and writhed together,
I threw my arms above my head,
For close by my side, in the lovely
weather,
I saw him reel and fall back dead.

I and the slayer met together,
He waited the death-stroke there in
his place,
With thoughts of death, in the lovely
weather,
Gapingly mazed at my madden'd face.

Madly I fought as we fought together ;
In vain : the little Christian band
The pagans drown'd, as in stormy
weather,
The river drowns low-lying land.

They bound my blood-stain'd hands to-
gether,
They bound his corpse to nod by my
side :
Then on we rode, in the bright March
weather,
With clash of cymbals did we ride.

We ride no more, no more together ;
My prison-bars are thick and strong,
I take no heed of any weather,
The sweet Saints grant I live not long.
May, 1856.

THE CHAPEL IN LYONNESS

SIR OZANA LE CURE HARDY. SIR
GALAHAD. SIR BORS DE GANYS.

Sir Ozana. All day long and every day,
From Christmas-Eve to Whit-Sunday,
Within that Chapel-aisle I lay,
And no man came a-near.

Naked to the waist was I,
And deep within my breast did lie,
Though no man any blood could spy,
The truncheon of a spear.

No meat did ever pass my lips
Those days. Alas ! the sunlight slips
From off the gilded parclose, dips,
And night comes on apace.

My arms lay back behind my head ;
Over my raised-up knees was spread
A samite cloth of white and red ;
A rose lay on my face.

Many a time I tried to shout ;
But as in dream of battle-rout,
My frozen speech would not well out ;
I could not even weep.

With inward sigh I see the sun
Fade off the pillars one by one,
My heart faints when the day is done,
Because I cannot sleep.

Sometimes strange thoughts pass
through my head ;
Not like a tomb is this my bed,
Yet oft I think that I am dead ;
That round my tomb is writ,

“ Ozana of the hardy heart,
Knight of the Table Round,
Pray for his soul, lords, of your part ;
A true knight he was found.”

Ah ! me, I cannot fathom it. [*He sleeps.*]

Sir Galahad. All day long and every day,
Till his madness pass'd away,
I watch'd Ozana as he lay
Within the gilded screen.

All my singing moved him not ;
As I sung my heart grew hot,
With the thought of Launcelot
Far away, I ween.

So I went a little space
From out the chapel, bathed my face
In the stream that runs apace
By the churchyard wall.

There I pluck'd a faint wild rose,
Hard by where the linden grows,
Sighing over silver rows
Of the lilies tall.

I laid the flower across his mouth ;
The sparkling drops seem'd good for
drouth ;
He smiled, turn'd round towards the
south,
Held up a golden tress.

The light smote on it from the west ;
He drew the covering from his breast,
Against his heart that hair he pressed ;
Death him soon will bless.

Sir Bors. I enter'd by the western door ;
I saw a knight's helm lying there ;
I raised my eyes from off the floor,
And caught the gleaming of his hair

I slept full softly up to him ;
 I laid my chin upon his head ;
 I felt him smile ; my eyes did swim,
 I was so glad he was not dead.

I heard Ozana murmur low.
 "There comes no sleep nor any love."
 But Galahad stoop'd and kiss'd his brow :
 He shiver'd ; I saw his pale lips move.

Sir Ozana. There comes no sleep nor
 any love ;
 Ah me ! I shiver with delight.
 I am so weak I cannot move ;
 God move me to thee, dear, to-night !
 Christ help ! I have but little wit :
 My life went wrong ; I see it writ,

"Ozana of the hardy heart,
 Knight of the Table Round,
 Pray for his soul, lords, on your part ;
 A good knight he was found."

Now I begin to fathom it. [*He dies.*]

Sir Bors. Galahad sits dreamily :
 What strange things may his eyes see,
 Great blue eyes fix'd full on me ?
 On his soul, Lord, have mercy.

Sir Galahad. Ozana, shall I pray for
 thee ?

Her cheek is laid to thine ;
 No long time hence, also I see
 Thy wasted fingers twine

Within the tresses of her hair
 That shineth gloriously,
 Thinly outspread in the clear air
 Against the jasper sea.

September, 1856.

SUMMER DAWN

PRAY but one prayer for me 'twixt thy
 closed lips ;
 Think but one thought of me up in the
 stars.
 The summer night waneth, the morning
 light slips,
 Faint and gray 'twixt the leaves of the
 aspen, betwixt the cloud-bars,
 That are patiently waiting there for the
 dawn :
 Patient and colorless, though Heaven's
 gold
 Waits to float through them along with
 the sun.
 Far out in the meadows, above the young
 corn,

The heavy elms wait, and restless and
 cold
 The uneasy wind rises ; the roses are
 dun ;
 They pray the long gloom through for
 daylight new born,
 Round the lone house in the midst of
 the corn.
 Speak but one word to me over the
 corn,
 Over the tender, bow'd locks of the
 corn.
 October, 1856.

HANDS

'TwiXt the sunlight and the shade
 Float up memories of my maid :
 God, remember Guendolen !

Gold or gems she did not wear,
 But her yellow rippled hair,
 Like a veil, hid Guendolen !

'TwiXt the sunlight and the shade,
 My rough hands so strangely made,
 Folded Golden Guendolen.

Hands used to grip the sword-hilt hard,
 Framed her face, while on the sward
 Tears fell down from Guendolen.

Guendolen now speaks no word,
 Hands fold round about the sword :
 Now no more of Guendolen.

Only 'twixt the light and shade
 Floating memories of my maid
 Make me pray for Guendolen.
 1856.

GOLD HAIR

Is it not true that every day
 She climbeth up the same strange way,
 Her scarlet cloak spread broad and gay,
 Over my golden hair ?

When I undo the knotted mass,
 Fathoms below the shadows pass
 Over my hair along the grass.
 O my golden hair !

See on the marble parapet,
 I lean my brow, strive to forget
 That fathoms below my hair grows wet
 With the dew, my golden hair.

See on the marble parapet,
 The faint red stains with tears are wet ;
 The long years pass, no help comes yet
 To free my golden hair.

And yet : but I am growing old,
For want of love my heart is cold ;
Years pass, the while I loose and fold
The fathoms of my hair.

1858.¹

THE DEFENCE OF GUENEVERE

But, knowing now that they would have
her speak,
She threw her wet hair backward from
her brow,
Her hand close to her mouth touching
her cheek,

As though she had had there a shameful
blow,
And feeling it shameful to feel aught
but shame
All through her heart, yet felt her cheek
burned so,

She must a little touch it ; like one lame
She walked away from Gauwaine, with
her head
Still lifted up ; and on her cheek of
flame

The tears dried quick ; she stopped at
last and said :

“ O knights and lords, it seems but little
skill
To talk of well-known things past now
and dead.

“ God wot I ought to say, I have done ill,
And pray you all forgiveness heartily !
Because you must be right, such great
lords ; still

“ Listen, suppose your time were come
to die,

And you were quite alone and very
weak ;

Yea, laid a dying while very mightily

“ The wind was ruffling up the narrow
streak

Of river through your broad lands run-
ning well :

Suppose a hush should come, then some
one speak :

“ One of these cloths is heaven, and one
is hell,

¹ The preceding, poem, *Hands*, published under that title in the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine, 1856, and the lyric stanzas to which I have here given the title *Gold Hair*, both form part of *Rapunzel* in the *Guenevere* volume, 1858.

Now choose one cloth for ever ; which
they be,
I will not tell you, you must somehow
tell

“ Of your own strength and mightiness ;
here, see ! ”

Yea, yea, my lord, and you to ope your
eyes,
At foot of your familiar bed to see

“ A great God’s angel standing, with
such dyes,
Not known on earth, on his great wings,
and hands.
Held out two ways, light from the inner
skies

“ Showing him well, and making his
commands
Seem to be God’s commands, moreover,
too,
Holding within his hands the cloths on
wands ;

“ And one of these strange choosing
cloths was blue,
Wavy and long, and one cut short and
red ;
No man could tell the better of the two.

“ After a shivering half-hour you said :
‘ God help ! heaven’s color, the blue ; ’
and he said, ‘ hell.’
Perhaps you would then roll upon your
bed,

“ And cry to all good men that loved
you well,
‘ Ah Christ ! if only I had known,
known, known ; ’
Launcelot went away, then I could tell,

“ Like wisest man how all things would
be, moan,
And roll and hurt myself, and long to die,
And yet fear much to die for what was
sown.

“ Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
Whatever may have happened through
these years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that
you lie.”

Her voice was low at first, being full of
tears.

But as it cleared, it grew full loud and
shrill,

Growing a windy shriek in all men’s
ears,

A ringing in their startled brains, until
She said that Gauwaine lied, then her
voice sunk,

And her great eyes began again to fill,

Though still she stood right up, and
never shrunk,
But spoke on bravely, glorious lady fair!
Whatever tears her full lips may have
drunk,

She stood, and seemed to think, and
wrung her hair,
Spoke out at last with no more trace of
shame,
With passionate twisting of her body
there:

"It chanced upon a day that Launcelot
came
To dwell at Arthur's court: at Christ-
mastime
This happened; when the heralds sung
his name,

"Son of King Ban of Benwick, seemed
to chime
Along with all the bells that rang that
day,
O'er the white roofs, with little change
of rhyme.

"Christmas and whitened winter passed
away,
And over me the April sunshine came,
Made very awful with black hail-clouds,
yea

"And in the Summer I grew white with
flame,
And bowed my head down: Autumn,
and the sick
Sure knowledge things would never be
the same,

"However often Spring might be most
thick
Of blossoms and buds, smote on me, and
I grew
Careless of most things, let the clock
tick, tick,

"To my unhappy pulse, that beat right
through
My eager body; while I laughed out loud,
And let my lips curl up at false or true,

"Seemed cold and shallow without any
cloud.

Behold, my judges, then the cloths were
brought;

While I was dizzied thus, old thoughts
would crowd,

"Belonging to the time ere I was bought
By Arthur's great name and his little
love;
Must I give up for ever then, I thought,

"That which I deemed would ever
round me move
Glorifying all things; for a little word,
Scarce ever meant at all, must I now
prove

"Stone-cold for ever? Pray you, does
the Lord
Will that all folks should be quite happy
and good?
I love God now a little, if this cord

"Were broken, once for all what striving
could
Make me love anything in earth or
heaven?
So day by day it grew, as if one should

"Slip slowly down some path worn
smooth and even,
Down to a cool sea on a summer day;
Yet still in slipping there was some
small leaven

"Of stretched hands catching small
stones by the way,
Until one surely reached the sea at last,
And felt strange new joy as the worn
head lay

"Back, with the hair like sea-weed.
yea all past
Sweat of the forehead, dryness of the lips,
Washed utterly out by the dear waves
o'ercast,

"In the lone sea, far off from any ships!
Do I not know now of a day in Spring?
No minute of that wild day ever slips

"From out my memory; I hear thrushes
sing,
And wheresoever I may be, straightway
Thoughts of it all come up with most
fresh sting:

"I was half mad with beauty on that
day,
And went without my ladies all alone.
In a quiet garden walled round every
way;

"I was right joyful of that wall of stone,
That shut the flowers and trees up with
the sky,
And trebled all the beauty : to the bone,

"Yea right through to my heart, grown
very shy
With wary thoughts, it pierced, and
made me glad ;
Exceedingly glad, and I knew verily,

"A little thing just then had made me
mad ;
I dared not think, as I was wont to do,
Sometimes, upon my beauty ; if I had

"Held out my long hand up against the
blue,
And, looking on the tenderly darken'd
fingers,
Thought that by rights one ought to see
quite through,

"There, see you, where the soft still
light yet lingers,
Round by the edges ; what should I have
done,
If this had joined with yellow spotted
singers,

"And startling green drawn upward by
the sun ?
But shouting, loosed out, see now ! all
my hair,
And trancedly stood watching the west
wind run

"With faintest half-heard breathing
sound : why there
I lose my head e'en now in doing this ;
But shortly listen : in that garden fair

"Came Launcelot walking ; this is true,
the kiss
Wherewith we kissed in meeting that
spring day,
I scarce dare talk of the remember'd bliss,

"When both our mouths went wander-
ing in one way,
And aching sorely, met among the
leaves ;
Our hands being left behind strained
far away.

"Never within a yard of my bright
sleeves
Had Launcelot come before : and now
so nigh !
After that day why is it Guenevere
grieves ?

"Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwainé, lie,
Whatever happened on through all
those years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that
you lie.

"Being such a lady could I weep these
tears
If this were true ? A great queen such as I
Having sinn'd this way, straight her
conscience sears ;

"And afterwards she liveth hatefully,
Slaying and poisoning, certes never
weeps :
Gauwaine be friends now, speak me
lovingly.

"Do I not see how God's dear pity creeps
All through your frame, and trembles in
your mouth ?
Remember in what grave your mother
sleeps,

"Buried in some place far down in the
south
Men are forgetting as I speak to you ;
By her head sever'd in that awful drouth

"Of pity that drew Agravaïne's fell blow,
I pray your pity ! let me not scream out
Forever after, when the shrill winds blow

"Through half your castle-locks ! let
me not shout
For ever after in the winter night
When you ride out alone ! in battle-rout

"Let not my rusting tears make your
sword light !
Ah ! God of mercy, how he turns away !
So, ever must I dress me to the fight,

"So : let God's justice work ! Gauwaine,
I say,
See me hew down your proofs : yea all
men know
Even as you said how Mellyagraunce one
day,

"One bitter day in *la Fausse Garde*, for so
All good knights held it after, saw :
Yea, sirs, by cursed unknowingly outrage ;
though

"You, Gauwaine, held his word without
a flaw.

Not so, fair lords, even if the world
should end

"This very day, and you were judges
here

Instead of God. Did you see Melly-
graunce

When Launcelot stood by him? what
white fear

"Curdled his blood, and how his teeth
did dance,

His side sink in? as my knight cried and
said :

'Slayer of unarm'd men, here is a chance !

" 'Setter of traps, I pray you guard your
head,

By God I am so glad to fight with you,
Stripper of ladies, that my hand feels lead

" 'For driving weight; hurrah now!
draw and do,

For all my wounds are moving in my
breast,

And I am getting mad with waiting so.'

"He struck his hands together o'er the
beast,

Who fell down flat, and grovell'd at his
feet,

And groan'd at being slain so young :
'At least,'

"My knight said, 'Rise you, sir, who are
so fleet

At catching ladies, half-arm'd will I
fight,

My left side all uncovered !' then I weet,

"Up sprang Sir Mellyagraunce with
great delight

Upon his knave's face ; not until just
then

Did I quite hate him, as I saw my knight

"Along the lists look to my stake and
pen

With such a joyous smile, it made me
sigh

From agony beneath my waist-chain,
when

"The fight began, and to me they drew
nigh ;

Ever Sir Launcelot kept him on the right,
And traversed warily, and ever high

"And fast leapt caitiff's sword, until my
knight

Sudden threw up his sword to his left
hand,

Caught it and swung it ; that was all the
fight ;

"Except a spout of blood on the hot land ;
For it was hottest summer ; and I know
I wonder'd how the fire, while I should
stand,

"And burn, against the heat, would
quiver so,

Yards above my head ; thus these mat-
ters went ;

Which things were only warnings of
the woe

"That fell on me. Yet Mellyagraunce
was shent,

For Mellyagraunce had fought against
the Lord ;

Therefore, my lords, take heed lest you
be blent

"With all his wickedness ; say no rash
word

Against me, being so beautiful ; my eyes
Wept all away to gray, may bring some
sword

"To drown you in your blood ; see my
breast rise,

Like waves of purple sea, as here I stand ;
And how my arms are moved in won-
derful wise,

"Yea also at my full heart's strong com-
mand,

See through my long throat how the
words go up

In ripples to my mouth ; how in my hand

"The shadow lies like wine within a cup
Of marvellously color'd gold ; yea now

This little wind is rising, look you up,

"And wonder how the light is falling so
Within my moving tresses : will you dare

When you have looked a little on my
brow,

"To say this thing is vile? or will you
care

For any plausible lies of cunning woof,
When you can see my face with no lie
there

"Forever? am I not a gracious proof?—
'But in your chamber Launcelot was
found'—

Is there a good knight then would stand
aloof,

"When a queen says with gentle
queenly sound :

‘ O true as steel, come now and talk with
me,
I love to see your step upon the ground

“ ‘ Unwavering, also well I love to see
That gracious smile light up your face,
and hear
Your wonderful words, that all mean
verily

“ ‘ The thing they seem to mean : good
friend, so dear
To me in everything, come here to-night,
Or else the hours will pass most dull and
drear ;

“ ‘ if you come not, I fear this time I
might
Get thinking over much of times gone
by,
When I was young, and green hope was
in sight :

“ ‘ For no man cares now to know why I
sigh ;
And no man comes to sing me pleasant
songs,
Nor any brings me the sweet flowers
that lie

“ ‘ So thick in the gardens ; therefore
one so longs
To see you, Launcelot ; that we may be
Like children once again, free from all
wrongs

“ ‘ Just for one night.’ Did he not come
to me ?
What thing could keep true Launcelot
away
If I said, ‘ Come ? ’ there was one less
than three

“ In my quiet room that night, and we
were gay ;
Till sudden I rose up, weak, pale, and
sick,
Because a bawling broke our dream up,
yea

“ I looked at Launcelot’s face and could
not speak,
For he looked helpless too, for a little
while ;
Then I remember how I tried to shriek,
“ And could not, but fell down ; from
tile to tile
The stones they threw up rattled o’er
my head [while
And made me dizzier ; till within a

“ My maids were all about me, and my
head
On Launcelot’s breast was being soothed
away
From its white chattering, until Launce-
lot said : . . .

“ By God ! I will not tell you more to-
day,
Judge any way you will : what matters
it ?
You know quite well the story of that
fray,

“ How Launcelot still’d their bawling,
the mad fit
That caught up Gauwaine, all, all,
verily,
But just that which would save me ;
these things flit.

“ Nevertheless you, O Sir Gauwaine, lie,
Whatever may have happen’d these long
years,
God knows I speak truth, saying that
you lie !

“ All I have said is truth, by Christ’s
dear tears.”
She would not speak another word, but
stood
Turn’d sideways ; listening, like a man
who hears

His brother’s trumpet sounding through
the wood
Of his foes’ lances. She leaned eagerly,
And gave a slight spring sometimes, as
she could

At last hear something really ; joyfully
Her cheek grew crimson, as the head-
long speed
Of the roan charger drew all men to see,
The knight who came was Launcelot at
good need. 1858.

THE GILLIFLOWER OF GOLD

A golden gilliflower to-day
I wore upon my helm alway,
And won the prize of this tourney.
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.

However well Sir Giles might sit,
His sun was weak to wither it,
Lord Miles’s blood was dew on it :
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.

Although my spear in splinters flew,
From John's steel-coat, my eye was
true ;

I wheel'd about, and cried for you.
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.

Yea, do not doubt my heart was good,
Though my sword flew like rotten wood,
To shout, although I scarcely stood,
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.

My hand was steady too, to take
My axe from round my neck, and break
John's steel-coat up for my love's sake.
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.

When I stood in my tent again,
Arming afresh, I felt a pain
Take hold of me, I was so fain—
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée—

To hear : *Honneur aux fils des preux !*
Right in my ears again, and shew
The gilliflower blossom'd new.
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.

The Sieur Guillaume against me came,
His tabard bore three points of flame
From a red heart ; with little blame,—
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée,—

Our tough spears crackled up like straw ;
He was the first to turn and draw
His sword, that had nor speck nor flaw ;
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.

But I felt weaker than a maid,
And my brain, dizzied and afraid,
Within my helm a fierce tune play'd,
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée,

Until I thought of your dear head,
Bow'd to the gilliflower bed,
The yellow flowers stain'd with red ;
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.

Crash ! how the swords met : *giroflée !*
The fierce tune in my helm would play,
La belle ! la belle ! jaune giroflée !
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.

Once more the great swords met again :
“ *La belle ! la belle !* ” but who fell then ?
Le Sieur Guillaume, who struck down
ten ;
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.

And as with mazed and unarm'd face,
Toward my own crown and the Queen's
place,

They led me at a gentle pace,—
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée,—

I almost saw your quiet head
Bow'd o'er the gilliflower bed.
The yellow flowers stain'd with red.
Hah ! hah ! la belle jaune giroflée.
1858.

SHAMEFUL DEATH

THERE were four of us about that bed ;
The mass-priest knelt at the side,
I and his mother stood at the head,
Over his feet lay the bride ;
We were quite sure that he was dead,
Though his eyes were open wide.

He did not die in the night,
He did not die in the day,
But in the morning twilight
His spirit pass'd away,
When neither sun nor moon was bright,
And the trees were merely gray.

He was not slain with the sword,
Knight's axe, or the knightly spear,
Yet spoke he never a word
After he came in here ;
I cut away the cord
From the neck of my brother dear.

He did not strike one blow,
For the recreants came behind,
In a place where the hornbeams grow,
A path right hard to find,
For the hornbeam boughs swing so,
That the twilight makes it blind.

They lighted a great torch then,
When his arms were pinion'd fast,
Sir John the knight of the Fen,
Sir Guy of the Dolorous Blast,
With knights threescore and ten,
Hung brave Lord Hugh at last.

I am threescore and ten,
And my hair is all turn'd gray,
But I met Sir John of the Fen
Long ago on a summer day,
And am glad to think of the moment
when

I took his life away.

I am threescore and ten,
And my strength is mostly pass'd,
But long ago I and my men,
When the sky was overcast,
And the smoke roll'd over the reeds of
the fen,
Slew Guy of the Dolorous Blast.

And now, knights all of you,
 I pray you pray for Sir Hugh,
 A good knight and a true,
 And for Alice, his wife, pray too.
 1858.

THE EVE OF CRECY

GOLD on her head, and gold on her feet,
 And gold where the hems of her kirtle
 meet,

And a golden girdle round my sweet ;
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Margaret's maids are fair to see,
 Freshly dress'd and pleasantly ;
 Margaret's hair falls down to her knee ;
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

If I were rich I would kiss her feet ;
 I would kiss the place where the gold
 hems meet,
 And the golden kirtle round my sweet :
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Ah me ! I have never touch'd her hand ;
 When the arrière-ban goes through the
 land,
 Six basnets under my pennon stand ;
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

And many an one grins under his hood :
 Sir Lambert du Bois, with all his men
 good,
 Has neither food nor firewood ;
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

If I were rich I would kiss her feet,
 And the golden girdle of my sweet,
 And thereabouts where the gold hems
 meet ;
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Yet even now it is good to think,
 While my poor varlets grumble and
 drink
 In my desolate hall, where the fires
 sink,—
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.—

Of Margaret sitting glorious there,
 In glory of gold and glory of hair,
 And glory of glorious face most fair ;
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

Likewise to-night I make good cheer,
 Because this battle draweth near :
 For what have I to lose or fear ?
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

For, look you, my horse is good to prance
 A right fair measure in this war-dance
 Before the eyes of Philip of France ;
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

And sometime it may hap, perdie,
 While my new towers stand up three
 and three,
 And my hall gets painted fair to see—
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite—

That folks may say : Times change, by
 the rood,
 For Lambert, banneret of the wood,
 Has heaps of food and firewood ;
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.

And wonderful eyes, too, under the hood
 Of a damsel of right noble blood.
 St. Ives, for Lambert of the Wood !
Ah ! qu'elle est belle La Marguerite.
 1858.

THE SAILING OF THE SWORD

ACROSS the empty garden-beds,
When the Sword went out to sea.
 I scarcely saw my sisters' heads
 Bowed each beside a tree.
 I could not see the castle leads,
When the Sword went out to sea.

Alicia wore a scarlet gown,
When the Sword went out to sea,
 But Ursula's was russet brown :
 For the mist we could not see
 The scarlet roofs of the good town,
When the Sword went out to sea.

Green holly in Alicia's hand,
When the Sword went out to sea ;
 With sere oak-leaves did Ursula stand ;
 Oh ! yet alas for me !
 I did but bear a peel'd white wand,
When the Sword went out to sea.

O, russet brown and scarlet bright,
When the Sword went out to sea,
 My sisters wore ; I wore but white :
 Red, brown, and white, are three ;
 Three damozels ; each had a knight,
When the Sword went out to sea.

Sir Robert shouted loud, and said ;
When the Sword went out to sea,
 ' Alicia, while I see thy head,
 What shall I bring for thee ?'
 " O, my sweet Lord, a ruby red :"
The Sword went out to sea.

Sir Miles said, while the sails hung down,
When the Sword went out to sea,
 "O, Ursula! while I see the town,
 What shall I bring for thee?"
 "Dear knight, bring back a falcon
 brown:"

The Sword went out to Sea.

But my Roland, no word he said
When the Sword went out to sea,
 But only turn'd away his head;
 A quick shriek came from me:
 "Come back, dear lord, to your white
 maid!"

The Sword went out to sea.

The hot sun bit the garden-beds
When the Sword came back from sea;
 Beneath an apple-tree our heads
 Stretched out toward the sea;
 Gray gleamed the thirsty castle-leads,
When the Sword came back from sea.

Lord Robert brought a ruby red,
When the Sword came back from sea;
 He kissed Alicia on the head:
 "I am come back to thee;
 'T is time, sweet love, that we were
 wed,

Now the Sword is back from sea!"

Sir Miles he bore a falcon brown,
When the Sword came back from sea;
 His arms went round tall Ursula's gown:
 "What joy, O love, but thee?
 Let us be wed in the good town,
Now the Sword is back from sea!"

My heart grew sick, no more afraid,
When the Sword came back from sea;
 Upon the deck a tall white maid
 Sat on Lord Roland's knee;
 His chin was press'd upon her head,
When the Sword came back from sea!
 1858.

THE BLUE CLOSET

THE DAMOZELS

LADY ALICE, lady Louise,
 Between the wash of the tumbling seas
 We are ready to sing, if so ye please:
 So lay your long hands on the keys;
 "Sing, *Laudate pueri.*"

*And ever the great bell overhead
 Boom'd in the wind a knell for the dead,
 Though no one toll'd it, a knell for the
 dead.*

LADY LOUISE

Sister, let the measure swell
 Not too loud; for you sing not well
 If you drown the faint boom of the bell;
 He is weary, so am I.

*And ever the chevron overhead
 Flapp'd on the banner of the dead;
 (Was he asleep, or was he dead?)*

LADY ALICE

Alice the Queen, and Louise the Queen,
 Two damzels wearing purple and green,
 Four lone ladies dwelling here
 From day to day and year to year;
 And there is none to let us go;
 To break the locks of the doors below,
 Or shovel away the heaped-up snow;
 And when we die no man will know
 That we are dead; but they give us
 leave,

Once every year on Christmas-eve,
 To sing in the Closet Blue one song;
 And we should be so long, so long.
 If we dared, in singing; for dream on
 dream.

They float on in a happy stream;
 Float from the gold strings, float from
 the keys
 Float from the open'd lips of Louise;
 But, alas! the sea-salt oozes through
 The chinks of the tiles of the Closet
 Blue;

*And ever the great bell overhead
 Booms in the wind a knell for the dead,
 The wind plays on it a knell for the
 dead.*

THEY SING ALL TOGETHER

How long ago was it, how long ago,
 He came to this tower with hands full of
 snow?

"Kneel down, O love Louise, kneel
 down!" he said,
 And sprinkled the dusty snow over my
 head.

He watch'd the snow melting, it ran
 through my hair,
 Ran over my shoulders, white shoulders
 and bare.

"I cannot weep for thee, poor love
 Louise,
 For my tears are all hidden deep under
 the seas;

"In a gold and blue casket she keeps all
my tears,
But my eyes are no longer blue, as in old
years ;

"Yea, they grow gray with time, grow
small and dry,
I am so feeble now, would I might die."

*And in truth the great bell overhead
Left off his pealing for the dead,
Perchance, because the wind was dead.*

Will he come back again, or is he dead ?
O ! is he sleeping, my scarf round his
head ?

Or did they strangle him as he lay there,
With the long scarlet scarf I used to
wear ?

Only I pray thee, Lord, let him come
here !

Both his soul and his body to me are
most dear.

Dear Lord, that loves me, I wait to re-
ceive
Either body or spirit this wild Christmas-
eve.

*Through the floor shot up a lily red,
With a patch of earth from the land of
the dead,
For he was strong in the land of the dead.*

What matter that his cheeks were pale,
His kind kiss'd lips all gray ?

"O, love Louise, have you waited long ?"
"O, my lord Arthur, yea."

What if his hair that brushed her cheek
Was stiff with frozen rime ?

His eyes were grown quite blue again,
As in the happy time.

"O, love Louise, this is the key
Of the happy golden land !

O, sisters, cross the bridge with me,
My eyes are full of sand.

What matter that I cannot see,
If ye take me by the hand ?"

*And ever the great bell overhead,
And the tumbling seas mourn'd for the
dead ;*

*For their song ceased, and they were
dead !*

1858.

THE HAYSTACK IN THE FLOODS

HAD she come all the way for this,
To part at last without a kiss ?
Yea, had she borne the dirt and rain
That her own eyes might see him slain
Beside the haystack in the floods ?

Along the dripping leafless woods,
The stirrup touching either shoe,
She rode astride as troopers do ;
With kirtle kilted to her knee,
To which the mud splash'd wretchedly ;
And the wet dripp'd from every tree
Upon her head and heavy hair,
And on her eyelids broad and fair ;
The tears and rain ran down her face.

By fits and starts they rode apace,
And very often was his place
Far off from her ; he had to ride
Ahead, to see what might betide
When the roads cross'd ; and sometimes,
when

There rose a murmuring from his men,
Had to turn back with promises.
Ah me ! she had but little ease ;
And often for pure doubt and dread
She sobb'd, made giddy in the head
By the swift riding ; while, for cold,
Her slender fingers scarce could hold
The wet reins ; yea, and scarcely, too,
She felt the foot within her shoe
Against the stirrup : all for this,
To part at last without a kiss
Beside the haystack in the floods.

For when they near'd that old soak'd
hay,

They saw across the only way
That Judas, Godmar, and the three
Red running lions dismally
Grinn'd from his pennon, under which
In one straight line along the ditch,
They counted thirty heads.

So then
While Robert turn'd round to his men,
She saw at once the wretched end,
And, stooping down, tried hard to rend
Her coil the wrong way from her head,
And hid her eyes ; while Robert said :
"Nay, love, 'tis scarcely two to one ;
At Poitiers where we made them run
So fast—why, sweet my love, good
cheer,

The Gascon frontier is so near,
Nought after us."

But : "O !" she said,
"My God ! my God ! I have to tread

The long way back without you ; then
The court at Paris ; those six men ;
The gratings of the Chatelet ;
The swift Seine on some rainy day
Like this, and people standing by,
And laughing, while my weak hands
try

To recollect how strong men swim.
All this, or else a life with him,
For which I should be damned at last,
Would God that this next hour were
past ! ”

He answer'd not, but cried his cry,
“ St. George for Marny ! ” cheerily ;
And laid his hand upon her rein.
Alas ! no man of all his train
Gave back that cheery cry again ;
And, while for rage his thumb beat fast
Upon his sword-hilt, some one cast
About his neck a kerchief long,
And bound him.

Then they went along
To Godmar ; who said : “ Now, Jehane,
Your lover's life is on the wane
So fast, that, if this very hour
You yield not as my paramour,
He will not see the rain leave off :
Nay, keep your tongue from gibe and
scoff

Sir Robert, or I slay you now.”

She laid her hand upon her brow,
Then gazed upon the palm, as though
She thought her forehead bled, and :
“ No ! ”

She said, and turn'd her head away,
As there was nothing else to say,
And everything was settled : red
Grew Godmar's face from chin to head :
“ Jehane, on yonder hill there stands
My castle, guarding well my lands ;
What hinders me from taking you,
And doing that I list to do
To your fair wilful body, while
Your knight lies dead ? ”

A wicked smile
Wrinkled her face, her lips grew thin,
A long way out she thrust her chin :
“ You know that I should strangle you
While you were sleeping ; or bite through
Your throat, by God's help : ah ! ” she
said,

“ Lord Jesus, pity your poor maid !
For in such wise they hem me in,
I cannot choose but sin and sin,
Whatever happens : yet I think
They could not make me eat or drink,
And so should I just reach my rest.”

“ Nay, if you do not my behest,
O Jehane ! though I love you well,”
Said Godmar, “ would I fail to tell
All that I know ? ” “ Foul lies,” she
said.

“ Eh ? lies, my Jehane ? by God's head,
At Paris folks would deem them true !
Do you know, Jehane, they cry for you :
‘ Jehane the brown ! Jehane the brown !
Give us Jehane to burn or drown ! ’
Eh !—gag me Robert !—sweet my friend,
This were indeed a piteous end
For those long fingers, and long feet,
And long neck, and smooth shoulders
sweet ;

An end that few men would forget
That saw it. So, an hour yet :
Consider, Jehane, which to take
Of life or death ! ”

So, scarce awake,
Dismounting, did she leave that place,
And totter some yards : with her face
Turn'd upward to the sky she lay,
Her head on a wet heap of hay,
And fell asleep : and while she slept,
And did not dream, the minutes crept
Round to the twelve again ; but she,
Being waked at last, sigh'd quietly,
And strangely childlike came, and said :
“ I will not.” Straightway Godmar's
head,

As though it hung on strong wires,
turn'd
Most sharply round, and his face burn'd.

For Robert, both his eyes were dry,
He could not weep, but gloomily
He seem'd to watch the rain ; yea, too,
His lips were firm ; he tried once more
To touch her lips ; she reach'd out, sore
And vain desire so tortured them,
The poor gray lips, and now the hem
Of his sleeve brush'd them.

With a start
Up Godmar rose, thrust them apart ;
From Robert's throat he loosed the
bands

Of silk and mail ; with empty hands
Held out, she stood and gazed, and saw,
The long bright blade without a flaw
Glide out from Godmar's sheath, his
hand

In Robert's hair ; she saw him bend
Back Robert's head ; she saw him send
The thin steel down ; the blow told well,
Right backward the knight Robert fell,
And moaned as dogs do, being half dead,
Unwitting, as I deem : so then
Godmar turn'd grinning to his men,

Who ran, some five or six, and beat
His head to pieces at their feet.

Then Godmar turn'd again and said :
" So, Jehane, the first fitte is read !
Take note, my lady, that your way
Lies backward to the Chatelet !"
She shook her head and gazed awhile
At her cold hands with a rueful smile,
As though this thing had made her mad.

This was the parting that they had
Beside the haystack in the floods.
1858.

TWO RED ROSES ACROSS THE MOON

THERE was a lady lived in a hall,
Large of her eyes and slim and tall ;
And ever she sung from noon to noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

There was a knight came riding by
In early spring, when the roads were dry ;
And he heard that lady sing at the noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

Yet none the more he stopp'd at all,
But he rode a-gallop past the hall ;
And left that lady singing at noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

Because, forsooth, the battle was set,
And the scarlet and blue had got to be
met,
He rode on the spur till the next warm
noon :
Two red roses across the moon.

But the battle was scatter'd from hill
to hill,
From the windmill to the watermill ;
And he said to himself, as it near'd the
noon,
Two red roses across the moon.

You scarce could see for the scarlet and
blue,
A golden helm or a golden shoe :
So he cried, as the fight grew thick at
the noon,
Two red roses across the moon !

Verily then the gold bore through
The huddled spears of the scarlet and
blue ;
And they cried, as they cut them down
at the noon,
Two red roses across the moon !

I trow he stopp'd when he rode again
By the hall, though draggled sore with
the rain ;
And his lips were pinch'd to kiss at the
noon
Two red roses across the moon.

Under the may she stoop'd to the crown,
All was gold, there was nothing of brown,
And the horns blew up in the hall at noon,
Two red roses across the moon. 1858.

SIR GILES' WAR-SONG ¹

*Ho ! is there any will ride with me,
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières ?*

The clink of arms is good to hear,
The flap of pennons fair to see ;
*Ho ! is there any will ride with me,
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières ?*

The leopards and lilies are fair to see ;
St. George Guienne ! right good to hear :
*Ho ! is there any will ride with me ;
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières ?*

I stood by the barrier,
My coat being blazon'd fair to see ;
*Ho ! is there any will ride with me,
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières ?*

Clisson put out his head to see,
And lifted his basnet up to hear ;
I pull'd him through the bars to ME,
Sir Giles, le bon des barrières.
1858.

NEAR AVALON

A SHIP with shields before the sun,
Six maidens round the mast,
A red-gold crown on every one,
A green gown on the last.

The fluttering green banners there
Are wrought with ladies' heads most
fair,
And a portraiture of Guenevere
The middle of each sail doth bear.

A ship which sails before the wind,
And round the helm six knights,

¹ Browning wrote to Morris, on the appearance of the *Earthly Paradise*: " It is a double delight to me to read such poetry, and know you, of all the world, wrote it,—you whose songs I used to sing while galloping by Fiesole in old days.—' Ho, is there any will ride with me ? ' "—(J. W. Mackail's *Life of William Morris*, Vol. I., p. 133.)

Their heaumes are on, whereby, half
blind,
They pass by many sights.

The tatter'd scarlet banners there,
Right soon will leave the spear-heads
bare,

Those six knights sorrowfully bear,
In all their heaumes some yellow hair.
1858.

IN PRISON

WEARILY, drearily,
Half the day long,
Flap the great banners
High over the stone;
Strangely and eerily
Sounds the wind's song,
Bending the banner-poles.

While, all alone,
Watching the loophole's spark,
Lie I, with life all dark,
Feet tether'd, hands fetter'd
Fast to the stone,
The grim wall, square letter'd
With prison'd men's groan.

Still strain the banner-poles
Through the wind's song,
Westward the banner rolls
Over my wrong. 1858.

FROM THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JASON

TO THE SEA

O BITTER sea, tumultuous sea,
Full many an ill is wrought by thee !—
Unto the wasters of the land
Thou holdest out thy wrinkled hand;
And when they leave the conquered
town,

Whose black smoke makes thy surges
brown,

Driven betwixt thee and the sun,
As the long day of blood is done,
From many a league of glittering waves
Thou smilest on them and their slaves.

The thin bright-eyed Phœnician
Thou drawest to thy waters wan,
With ruddy eve and golden morn
Thou temptest him, until, forlorn,
Unburied, under alien skies
Cast up ashore his body lies.

Yea, whoso sees thee from his door,
Must ever long for more and more;
Nor will the beechen bowl suffice,

Or homespun robe of little price,
Or hood well-woven from the fleece
Undyed, or unsiced wine of Greece;
So sore his heart is set upon
Purple, and gold, and cinnamon;
For as thou cravest, so he craves,
Until he rolls beneath thy waves,
Nor in some landlocked, unknown bay,
Can satiate thee for one day.

Now, therefore, O thou bitter sea,
With no long words we pray to thee,
But ask thee, hast thou felt before
Such strokes of the long ashen oar?
And hast thou yet seen such a prow
Thy rich and niggard waters plough?

Nor yet, O sea, shalt thou be cursed,
If at thy hands we gain the worst,
And, wrapt in water, roll about
Blind-eyed, unheeding song or shout,
Within thine eddies far from shore,
Warmed by no sunlight any more.

Therefore, indeed, we joy in thee,
And praise thy greatness, and will we
Take at thy hands both good and ill,
Yea, what thou wilt, and praise thee still,
Enduring not to sit at home,
And wait until the last days come,
When we no more may care to hold
White bosoms under crowns of gold,
And our dulled hearts no longer are
Stirred by the clangorous noise of war,
And hope within our souls is dead,
And no joy is remembered.

So, if thou hast a mind to slay,
Fair prize thou hast of us to-day;
And if thou hast a mind to save,
Great praise and honor shalt thou have;
But whatso thou wilt do with us,
Our end shall not be piteous,
Because our memories shall live
When folk forget the way to drive
The black keel through the heaped-up
sea,
And half dried up thy waters be. 1867.

THE NYMPH'S SONG TO HYLAS¹

I know a little garden close
Set thick with lily and red rose,
Where I would wander if I might
From dewy dawn to dewy night,
And have one with me wandering.
And though within it no birds sing,
And though no pillared house is there,

¹ This song reappears under the title *A Garden by the Sea* in "Poems by the Way," 1891, with slight variations in the text, the most important of which is noted below.

And though the apple boughs are bare
Of fruit and blossom, would to God,
Her feet upon the green grass trod,
And I beheld them as before.

There comes a murmur from the shore,
And in the place two fair streams are,
Drawn from the purple hills afar,
Drawn down unto the restless sea ;
The hills whose flowers ne'er fed the bee,
Still beaten by the billows green, ¹
Whose murmur comes unceasingly
Unto the place for which I cry.

For which I cry both day and night,
For which I let slip all delight,
That maketh me both deaf and blind,
Careless to win, unskilled to find,
And quick to lose what all men seek.

Yet tottering as I am, and weak,
Still have I left a little breath
To seek within the jaws of death
An entrance to that happy place,
To seek the unforgotten face
Once seen, once kissed, once reft from
me

Anigh the murmuring of the sea. 1867.

ORPHEUS' SONG OF TRIUMPH

O death, that maketh life so sweet,
O fear, with mirth before thy feet,
What have ye yet in store for us,
The conquerors, the glorious ?

Men say : " For fear that thou shouldst
die

To-morrow, let to-day pass by
Flower-crowned and singing," yet have
we

Passed our to-day upon the sea,
Or in a poisonous unknown land,
With fear and death on either hand,
And listless when the day was done
Have scarcely hoped to see the sun
Dawn on the morrow of the earth,
Nor in our hearts have thought of
mirth.

And while the world lasts, scarce again
Shall any sons of men bear pain
Like we have borne, yet be alive.

So surely not in vain we strive
Like other men for our reward ;
Sweet peace and deep, the checkered
sword

Beneath the ancient mulberry trees,
The smooth-paved gilded palaces,

¹ In *A Garden by the Sea*, these three lines
read :

Dark hills whose heath-bloom feeds no bee,
Dark shore no ship has ever seen,
Tormented by the billows green.

Where the shy thin-clad damsels sweet
Make music with their gold-ringed feet.
The fountain court amidst of it,
Where the short-haired slave-maidens
sit,

While on the veined pavement lie
The honied things and spicery
Their arms have borne from out the
town.

The dancers on the thymy down
In summer twilight, when the earth
Is still of all things but their mirth,
And echoes borne upon the wind
Of others in like way entwined.

The merchant-town's fair market-
place,

Where over many a changing face
The pigeons of the temple flit,
And still the outland merchants sit
Like kings above their merchandise,
Lying to foolish men and wise.

Ah ! if they heard that we were come
Into the bay, and bringing home
That which all men have talked about,
Some men with rage, and some with
doubt,

Some with desire, and some with praise ;
Then would the people throng the ways,
Nor heed the outland merchandise,
Nor any talk, from fools or wise,
But tales of our accomplished quest.

What soul within the house shall rest
When we come home ? The wily king
Shall leave his throne to see the thing ;
No man shall keep the landward gate,
The hurried traveller shall wait
Until our bulwarks graze the quay ;
Unslain the milk-white bull shall be
Beside the quivering altar-flame ;
Scarce shall the maiden clasp for shame
Over her breast the raiment thin
The morn that Argo cometh in.

Then cometh happy life again
That payeth well our toil and pain
In that sweet hour, when all our woe
But as a pensive tale we know,
Nor yet remember deadly fear ;
For surely now if death be near,
Unthought-of is it, and unseen
When sweet is, that hath bitter been.
1867.

SONGS OF ORPHEUS AND THE SIRENS

Sirens

O HAPPY seafarers are ye,
And surely all your ills are past,
And toil upon the land and sea,
Since ye are brought to us at last.

To you the fashion of the world,
 Wide lands laid waste, fair cities
 burned,
 And plagues, and kings from kingdoms
 hurled,
 Are nought, since hither ye have
 turned.

For as upon this beach we stand,
 And o'er our heads the sea-fowl flit,
 Our eyes behold a glorious land,
 And soon shall ye be kings of it.

Orpheus

A little more, a little more,
 O carriers of the Golden Fleece,
 A little labor with the oar,
 Before we reach the land of Greece.

E'en now perchance faint rumors reach
 Men's ears of this our victory,
 And draw them down unto the beach
 To gaze across the empty sea.

But since the longed-for day is nigh,
 And scarce a God could stay us now,
 Why do ye hang your heads and sigh,
 Hindering for nought our eager prow?

Sirens

Ah, had ye chanced to reach the home
 On which your fond desires were set,
 Into what troubles had ye come?
 Short love and joy, and long regret.

But now, but now, when ye have lain
 Asleep with us a little while
 Beneath the washing of the main,
 How calm shall be your wakening smile!

For ye shall smile to think of life
 That knows no troublous change or
 fear,
 No unavailing bitter strife,
 That ere its time brings trouble near.

Orpheus

Is there some murmur in your ears,
 That all that we have done is nought,
 And nothing ends our cares or fears,
 Till the last fear is on us brought?

Sirens

Alas! and will ye stop your ears,
 In vain desire to do aught,
 And wish to live 'mid cares and fears,
 Until the last fear makes you nought?

Orpheus

Is not the May-time now on earth,
 When close against the city wall
 The folks are singing in their mirth,
 While on their heads the May-flowers
 fall?

Sirens

Yes, May is come, and its sweet breath
 Shall well-nigh make you weep to-day,
 And pensive with swift-coming death,
 Shall ye be satiate of the May.

Orpheus

Shall not July bring fresh delight,
 As underneath green trees ye sit,
 And o'er some damsel's body white
 The noontide shadows change and
 flit?

Sirens

No new delight July shall bring
 But ancient fear and fresh desire,
 And spite of every lovely thing,
 Of July surely shall you tire.

Orpheus

And now, when August comes on thee.
 And 'mid the golden sea of corn
 The merry reapers thou mayst see,
 Wilt thou still think the earth forlorn?

Sirens

Set flowers upon thy short-lived head,
 And in thine heart forgetfulness
 Of man's hard toil, and scanty bread,
 And weary of those days no less.

Orpheus

Or wilt thou climb the sunny hill,
 In the October afternoon,
 To watch the purple earth's blood fill
 The gray vat to the maiden's tune?

Sirens

When thou beginnest to grow old,
 Bring back remembrance of thy bliss
 With that the shining cup doth hold,
 And weary helplessly of this.

Orpheus

Or pleasureless shall we pass by
 The long cold night and leaden day,
 That song, and tale, and minstrelsy
 Shall make as merry as the May?

Sirens

List then, to-night, to some old tale
 Until the tears o'erflow thine eyes;
 But what shall all these things avail,
 When sad to-morrow comes and dies?

Orpheus

And when the world is born again,
 And with some fair love, side by side,
 Thou wanderest 'twixt the sun and rain,
 In that fresh love-begetting tide;

Then, when the world is born again,
 And the sweet world before thee lies,
 Shall thy heart think of coming pain,
 Or vex itself with memories?

Sirens

Ah! then the world is born again
 With burning love unsatisfied,
 And new desires fond and vain,
 And weary days from tide to tide.

Ah! when the world is born again,
 A little day is soon gone by,
 When thou, unmoved by sun or rain,
 Within a cold straight house shalt lie.

Ah, will ye go, and whither then
 Will ye go from us, soon to die,
 To fill your three-score years and ten,
 With many an unnamed misery?

And this the wretchedest of all,
 That when upon your lonely eyes
 The last faint heaviness shall fall
 Ye shall bethink you of our cries.

Come back, nor grown old, seek in vain
 To hear us sing across the sea.
 Come back, come back, come back again,
 Come back, O fearful Minyae!

Orpheus

Ah, once again, ah, once again,
 The black prow plunges through the
 sea,
 Nor yet shall all your toil be vain,
 Nor yet forgot, O Minyae. 1867.

INVOCATION TO CHAUCER

(From the last book of the *Life and Death*
 of Jason)

So ends the winning of the Golden
 Fleece—

So ends the tale of that sweet rest and
 peace

That unto Jason and his love befell;
 Another story now my tongue must tell,
 And tremble in the telling. Would
 that I

Had but some portion of that mastery
 That from the rose-hung lanes of woody
 Kent

Through these five hundred years such
 songs have sent

To us, who meshed within this smoky
 net

Of unrejoicing labor, love them yet.
 And thou, O Master!—Yea, my Master
 still,

Whatever feet have scaled Parnassus'
 hill,

Since like thy measures, clear and sweet
 and strong,

Thames' stream scarce fettered drave the
 dace along

Unto the bastioned bridge, his only
 chain.—

O Master, pardon me, if yet in vain
 Thou art my Master, and I fail to bring
 Before men's eyes the image of the thing
 My heart is filled with: thou whose
 dreamy eyes

Beheld the flush to Cressid's cheeks arise,
 When Troilus rode up the praising street,
 As clearly as they saw thy townsmen
 meet [stood

Those who in vineyards of Poictou with-
 The glittering horror of the steel-topped
 wood. 1867.

AN APOLOGY

PROLOGUE OF THE EARTHLY PARADISE

OF Heaven or Hell I have no power to
 sing,

I cannot ease the burden of your fears,
 Or make quick-coming death a little
 thing,

Or bring again the pleasure of past years,
 Nor for my words shall ye forget your
 tears,

Or hope again for aught that I can say,
 The idle singer of an empty day.

But rather, when aweary of your mirth,
 From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,
 And, feeling kindly unto all the earth,
 Grudge every minute as it passes by,
 Made the more mindful that the sweet
 days die—

—Remember me a little then I pray,
 The idle singer of an empty day.

The heavy trouble, the bewildering care
 That weighs us down who live and earn
 our bread,
 These idle verses have no power to bear;
 So let me sing of names remembered,
 Because they, living not, can ne'er be
 dead,
 Or long time take their memory quite
 away
 From us poor singers of an empty day.
 Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due
 time,
 Why should I strive to set the crooked
 straight?
 Let it suffice me that my murmuring
 rhyme
 Beats with light wing against the ivory
 gate,
 Telling a tale not too importunate
 To those who in the sleepy region stay,
 Lulled by the singer of an empty day.
 Folk say, a wizard to a northern king

At Christmas-tide such wondrous things
 did show,
 That through one window men beheld
 the spring,
 And through another saw the summer
 glow,
 And through a third the fruited vines
 a-row,
 While still, unheard, but in its wonted
 way,
 Piped the drear wind of that December
 day.

So with this Earthly Paradise it is,
 If ye will read aright, and pardon me,
 Who strive to build a shadowy isle of
 bliss
 Midmost the beating of the steely sea,
 Where tossed about all hearts of men
 must be;
 Whose ravening monsters mighty men
 shall slay,
 Not the poor singer of an empty day.
1868.

ATALANTA'S RACE

ARGUMENT

Atalanta, daughter of King Schœneus, not willing to lose her virgin's estate, made it a law to all suitors that they should run a race with her in the public place, and if they failed to overcome her should die unrevenged; and thus many brave men perished. At last came Milanion, the son of Amphi-damas, who, outrunning her with the help of Venus, gained the virgin and wedded her.

THROUGH thick Arcadian woods a hunter
 went,
 Following the beasts upon a fresh spring
 day;
 But since his horn-tipped bow but seldom
 bent,
 Now at the noontide nought had happened
 to slay,
 Within a vale he called his hounds away,
 Harkening the echoes of his lone voice
 cling
 About the cliffs and through the beech-
 trees ring.
 But when they ended, still awhile he
 stood,
 And but the sweet familiar thrush could
 hear,
 And all the day-long noises of the wood,
 And o'er the dry leaves of the vanished
 year
 His hounds' feet pattering as they drew
 anear,

And heavy breathing from their heads
 low hung,
 To see the mighty cornel bow unstrung.
 Then smiling did he turn to leave the
 place,
 But with his first step some new fleeting
 thought
 A shadow cast across his sun-burnt
 face;
 I think the golden net that April
 brought
 From some warm world his wavering
 soul had caught;
 For, sunk in vague sweet longing, did he
 go
 Betwixt the trees with doubtful steps
 and slow.
 Yet howsoever slow he went, at last
 The trees grew sparser, and the wood
 was done;
 Whereon one farewell backward look he
[cast,

Then, turning round to see what place
 was won,
 With shaded eyes looked underneath the
 sun,
 And o'er green meads and new-turned
 furrows brown
 Beheld the gleaming of King Schoeneus'
 town.

So thitherward he turned, and on each
 side
 The folk were busy on the teeming
 land,
 And man and maid from the brown fur-
 rows cried,
 Or midst the newly blossomed vines did
 stand,
 And as the rustic weapon pressed the
 hand
 Thought of the nodding of the well-filled
 ear,
 Or how the knife the heavy bunch should
 shear.

Merry it was: about him sung the
 birds,
 The spring flowers bloomed along the
 firm dry road,
 The sleek-skinned mothers of the sharp-
 horned herds
 Now for the barefoot milking-maidens
 lowed;
 While from the freshness of his blue
 abode,
 Glad his death-bearing arrows to forget,
 The broad sun blazed, nor scattered
 plagues as yet.

Through such fair things unto the gates
 he came,
 And found them open, as though peace
 were there;
 Wherethrough, unquestioned of his
 race or name,
 He entered, and along the streets 'gan
 fare,
 Which at the first of folk were well-nigh
 bare;
 But pressing on, and going more hastily,
 Men hurrying too he 'gan at last to see.

Following the last of these he still
 pressed on,
 Until an open space he came unto,
 Where wreaths of fame had oft been lost
 and won,
 For feats of strength folks there were
 wont to do.
 And now our hunter looked for some-
 thing new,

Because the whole wide space was bare,
 and stilled
 The high seats were, with eager people
 filled.

There with the others to a seat he gat,
 Whence he beheld a broidered canopy,
 'Neath which in fair array King Schoeneus
 sat
 Upon his throne with councillors
 thereby;
 And underneath his well-wrought seat
 and high,
 He saw a golden image of the sun,
 A silver image of the Fleet-foot One.

A brazen altar stood beneath their feet
 Whereon a thin flame flicker'd in the
 wind;
 Nigh this a herald clad in raiment meet
 Made ready even now his horn to wind,
 By whom a huge man held a sword,
 entwin'd
 With yellow flowers; these stood a little
 space
 From off the altar, nigh the starting
 place.

And there two runners did the sign
 abide,
 Foot set to foot,—a young man slim and
 fair,
 Crisp-hair'd, well knit, with firm limbs
 often tried
 In places where no man his strength may
 spare:
 Dainty his thin coat was, and on his hair
 A golden circlet of renown he wore,
 And in his hand an olive garland bore.

But on this day with whom shall he con-
 tend?
 A maid stood by him like Diana clad
 When in the woods she lists her bow to
 bend,
 Too fair for one to look on and be glad,
 Who scarcely yet has thirty summers
 had,
 If he must still behold her from afar;
 Too fair to let the world live free from
 war.

She seem'd all earthly matters to forget;
 Of all tormenting lines her face was
 clear;
 Her wide gray eyes upon the goal were
 set
 Calm and unmov'd as though no soul were
 near.

But her foe trembled as a man in fear,
Nor from her loveliness one moment
turn'd

His anxious face with fierce desire that
burn'd.

Now through the hush there broke the
trumpet's clang

Just as the setting sun made eventide,
Then from light feet a spurt of dust
there sprang,

And swiftly were they running side by
side;

But silent did the thronging folk abide
Until the turning-post was reach'd at
last,

And round about it still abreast they
passed.

But when the people saw how close they
ran,

When half-way to the starting-point
they were,

A cry of joy broke forth, whereat the
man

Headed the white-foot runner, and drew
near

Unto the very end of all his fear;

And scarce his straining feet the ground
could feel,

And bliss unhop'd for o'er his heart 'gan
steal.

But 'midst the loud victorious shouts he
heard

Her footsteps drawing nearer, and the
sound

Of fluttering raiment, and thereat
afear'd

His flush'd and eager face he turn'd
around,

And even then he felt her past him
bound

Fleet as the wind, but scarcely saw her
there

Till on the goal she laid her fingers fair.

There stood she breathing like a little
child

Amid some warlike clamor laid asleep,
For no victorious joy her red lips smil'd,

Her cheek its wonted freshness did but
keep;

No glance lit up her clear gray eyes and
deep,

Though some divine thought soften'd all
her face

As once more rang the trumpet through
the place.

But her late foe stopp'd short amidst his
course,

One moment gaz'd upon her piteously,
Then with a groan his lingering feet did
force

To leave the spot whence he her eyes
could see;

And, changed like one who knows his
time must be

But short and bitter, without any word
He knelt before the bearer of the sword;

Then high rose up the gleaming deadly
blade,

Bar'd of its flowers, and through the
crowded place

Was silence now, and midst of it the
maid

Went by the poor wretch at a gentle
pace,

And he to hers upturn'd his sad white
face;

Nor did his eyes behold another sight
Ere on his soul there fell eternal light.

So was the pageant ended, and all folk
Talking of this and that familiar thing

In little groups from that sad concourse
broke,

For now the shrill bats were upon the
wing,

And soon dark night would slay the
evening,

And in dark gardens sang the nightin-
gale

Her little-headed, oft-repeated tale.

And with the last of all the hunter went,
Who, wondering at the strange sight he
had seen,

Prayed an old man to tell him what it
meant,

Both why the vanquished man so slain
had been,

And if the maiden were an earthly
queen,

Or rather what much more she seemed
to be,

No sharer in this world's mortality.

"Stranger," said he, "I pray she soon
may die

Whose lovely youth has slain so many
an one!

King Schoeneus' daughter is she verily,
Who when her eyes first looked upon the
sun

Was fain to end her life but new begun,

For he had vowed to leave but men
alone
Sprung from his loins when he from
earth was gone.

"Therefore he bade one leave her in
the wood,
And let wild things deal with her as
they might,
But this being done, some cruel god
thought good
To save her beauty in the world's
despite;
Folk say that her, so delicate and white
As now she is, a rough root-grubbing
bear
Amidst her shapeless cubs at first did
rear.

"In course of time the woodfolk slew
her nurse,
And to their rude abode the youngling
brought,
And reared her up to be a kingdom's
curse;
Who grown a woman, of no kingdom
thought,
But armed and swift, 'mid beasts de-
struction wrought,
Nor spared two shaggy centaur kings to
slay
To whom her body seemed an easy prey.

"So to this city, led by fate, she came
Whom known by signs, whereof I
cannot tell,
King Schoeneus for his child at last did
claim.
Nor otherwhere since that day doth she
dwell
Sending too many a noble soul to hell—
What! thine eyes glisten! what then,
thinkest thou
Her shining head unto the yoke to bow?

"Listen, my son, and love some other
maid
For she the saffron gown will never
wear,
And on no flower-strewn couch shall
she be laid,
Nor shall her voice make glad a lover's
ear:
Yet if of Death thou hast not any fear,
Yea, rather, if thou lov'st him utterly,
Thou still may'st woo her ere thou
com'st to die,

"Like him that on this day thou sawest
lie dead:

For, fearing as I deem the sea-born one,
The maid has vowed e'en such a man to
wed

As in the course her swift feet can out-
run,
But whoso fails herein, his days are
done:
He came the nighest that was slain to-
day,
Although with him I deem she did but
play.

"Behold, such mercy Atalanta gives
To those that long to win her loveliness;
Be wise! be sure that many a maid there
lives
Gentler than she, of beauty little less,
Whose swimming eyes thy loving words
shall bless,
When in some garden, knee set close to
knee,
Thou sing'st the song that love may
teach to thee."

So to the hunter spake that ancient man,
And left him for his own home pre-
sently:
But he turned round, and through the
moonlight wan
Reached the thick wood, and there
'twixt tree and tree
Distraught he passed the long night
feverishly,
'Twixt sleep and waking, and at dawn
arose
To wage hot war against his speechless
foes.

There to the hart's flank seemed his
shaft to grow,
As panting down the broad green glades
he flew,
There by his horn the Dryads well might
know
His thrust against the bear's heart had
been true,
And there Adonis' bane his javelin slew,
But still in vain through rough and
smooth he went,
For none the more his restlessness was
spent.

So wandering, he to Argive cities came,
And in the lists with valiant men he
stood,
And by great deeds he won him praise
and fame,
And heaps of wealth for little-valued
blood.

But none of all these things, or life,
seemed good
Unto his heart, where still unsatisfied
A ravenous longing warred with fear
and pride.

Therefore it happed when but a month
had gone

Since he had left King Schoeneus' city
old,

In hunting-gear again, again alone
The forest-bordered meads did he behold,
Where still mid thoughts of August's
quivering gold

Folk hoed the wheat, and clipped the
vine in trust

Of faint October's purple-foaming must.

And once again he passed the peaceful
gate,

While to his beating heart his lips did
lie,

That owning not victorious love and fate,
Said, half aloud, "And here too must I
try,

To win of alien men the mastery,
And gather for my head fresh meed of
fame

And cast new glory on my father's
name."

In spite of that, how beat his heart,
when first

Folk said to him, "And art thou come
to see

That which still makes our city's name
accurst

Among all mothers for its cruelty?
Then know indeed that fate is good to
thee

Because to-morrow a new luckless one
Against the whitefoot maid is pledged
to run."

So on the morrow with no curious eyes
As once he did, that piteous sight he
saw,

Nor did that wonder in his heart arise
As toward the goal the conquering maid
'gan draw,

Nor did he gaze upon her eyes with awe,
Too full the pain of longing filled his
heart

For fear or wonder there to have a part.

But O, how long the night was ere it
went!

How long it was before the dawn begun
Showed to the wakening birds the sun's
intent

That not in darkness should the world
be done!

And then, and then, how long before
the sun

Bade silently the toilers of the earth
Get forth to fruitless cares or empty
mirth!

And long it seemed that in the market-
place

He stood and saw the chaffering folk
go by,

Ere from the ivory throne King Schoe-
neus' face

Looked down upon the murmur royally,
But then came trembling that the time

was nigh
When he midst pitying looks his love

must claim,
And jeering voices must salute his name.

But as the throng he pierced to gain the
throne,

His alien face distraught and anxious
told

What hopeless errand he was bound
upon,

And, each to each, folk whispered to
behold

His godlike limbs; nay, and one woman
old

As he went by must pluck him by the
sleeve

And pray him yet that wretched love to
leave.

For sidling up she said, "Canst thou
live twice,

Fair son? canst thou have joyful youth
again,

That thus thou goest to the sacrifice
Thyself the victim? nay then, all in vain

Thy mother bore her longing and her
pain,

And one more maiden on the earth must
dwell

Hopeless of joy, nor fearing death and
hell.

"O, fool, thou knowest not the compact
then

That with the three-formed goddess she
has made

To keep her from the loving lips of men,
And in no saffron gown to be arrayed,

And therewithal with glory to be paid
And love of her the moonlit river sees

White 'gainst the shadow of the formless
trees.

"Come back, and I myself will pray
 for thee
 Unto the sea-born framer of delights,
 To give thee her who on the earth may be
 The fairest stirrer up to death and fights,
 To quench with hopeful days and joyous
 nights
 The flame that doth thy youthful heart
 consume :
 Come back, nor give thy beauty to the
 tomb."

How should he listen to her earnest
 speech ?
 Words, such as he not once or twice had
 said
 Unto himself, whose meaning scarce
 could reach
 The firm abode of that sad hardihead—
 He turned about, and through the
 marketstead
 Swiftly he passed, until before the
 throne
 In the cleared space he stood at last
 alone.

Then said the King, "Stranger, what
 dost thou here ?
 Have any of my folk done ill to thee ?
 Or art thou of the forest men in fear ?
 Or art thou of the sad fraternity
 Who still will strive my daughter's mates
 to be,
 Staking their lives to win an earthly
 bliss,
 The lonely maid, the friend of Artemis ?"

"O King," he said "thou sayest the
 word indeed ;
 Nor will I quit the strife till I have won
 My sweet delight, or death to end my
 need.
 And know that I am called Milanion,
 Of King Amphi-damas the well-loved
 son :
 So fear not that to thy old name, O King,
 Much loss or shame my victory will
 bring."

"Nay, Prince," said Schoeneus, "wel-
 come to this land
 Thou wert indeed, if thou wert here to
 try
 Thy strength 'gainst some one mighty
 of his hand ;
 Nor would we grudge thee well-won
 mastery.
 But now, why wilt thou come to me to
 die,

And at my door lay down thy luckless
 head,
 Swelling the band of the unhappy dead,

"Whose curses even now my heart doth
 fear ?
 Lo, I am old, and know what life can be,
 And what a bitter thing is death anear.
 O, Son ! be wise, and harken unto me,
 And if no other can be dear to thee,
 At least as now, yet is the world full
 wide,
 And bliss in seeming hopeless hearts may
 hide :

"But if thou lovest life, then all is
 lost."
 "Nay, King," Milanion said, "thy words
 are vain.
 Doubt not that I have counted well the
 cost.
 But say, on what day wilt thou that I
 gain
 Fulfilled delight, or death to end my
 pain.
 Right glad were I if it could be to-day,
 And all my doubts at rest for ever lay."

"Nay," said King Schoeneus, "thus it
 shall not be,
 But rather shalt thou let a month go by,
 And weary with thy prayers for victory
 What god thou know'st the kindest and
 most kind.
 So doing, still perchance thou shalt not
 die :
 And with my goodwill wouldst thou
 have the maid,
 For of the equal gods I grow afraid.

"And until then, O Prince, be thou my
 guest,
 And all these troublous things awhile
 forget."

"Nay," said he, "couldst thou give my
 soul good rest,
 And on mine head a sleepy garland set,
 Then had I 'scaped the meshes of the
 net, [word ;
 Nor shouldst thou hear from me another
 But now, make sharp thy fearful head-
 ing-sword.

"Yet will I do what son of man may do,
 And promise all the gods may most
 desire,
 That to myself I may at least be true ;
 And on that day my heart and limbs so
 tire,

With utmost strain and measureless desire,
That, at the worst, I may but fall asleep
When in the sunlight round that sword
shall sweep."

He went therewith, nor anywhere would
bide,
But unto Argos restlessly did wend ;
And there, as one who lays all hope aside,
Because the leech has said his life must
end,
Silent farewell he bade to foe and friend,
And took his way unto the restless sea,
For there he deemed his rest and help
might be.

UPON the shore of Argolis there stands
A temple to the goddess that he sought,
That, turned unto the lion-bearing lands,
Fenced from the east, of cold winds hath
no thought,
Though to no homestead there the
sheaves are brought,
No groaning press torments the close-
clipped murk,
Lonely the fane stands, far from all men's
work.

Pass through a close, set thick with
myrtle-trees,
Through the brass doors that guard the
holy place,
And entering, hear the washing of the
seas
That twice a-day rise high above the base,
And with the south-west urging them,
embrace
The marble feet of her that standeth
there
That shrink not, naked though they be
and fair.

Small is the fane through which the sea-
wind sings
About Queen Venus' well-wrought image
white,
But hung around are many precious
things,
The gifts of those who, longing for de-
light,
Have hung them there within the god-
dess' sight,
And in return have taken at her hands
The living treasures of the Grecian lands.

And thither now has come Milanion,
And showed unto the priests' wide open
eyes

Gifts fairer than all those that there
haveshone,
Silk cloths, inwrought with Indian
fantasies,
And bowls inscribed with sayings of the
wise
Above the deeds of foolish living things ;
And mirrors fit to be the gifts of kings.

And now before the Sea-born One he
stands,
By the sweet veiling smoke made dim
and soft,
And while the incense trickles from his
hands,
And while the odorous smoke-wreaths
hang aloft,
Thus doth he pray to her : " O Thou,
who oft
Hast holpen man and maid in their dis-
tress
Despise me not for this my wretchedness !

" O goddess, among us who dwell below,
Kings and great men, great for a little
while,
Have pity on the lowly heads that bow,
Nor hate the hearts that love them with-
out guile ;
Wilt thou be worse than these, and is
thy smile
A vain device of him who set thee here,
An empty dream of some artificer ?

" O great one, some men love, and are
ashamed ;
Some men are weary of the bonds of love ;
Yea, and by some men lightly art thou
blamed,
That from thy toils their lives they can-
not move,
And 'mid the ranks of men their man-
hood prove.
Alas ! O goddess, if thou slayest me
What new immortal can I serve but thee ?

" Think then, will it bring honor to thy
head
If folk say, ' Everything aside he cast
And to all fame and honor was he dead,
And to his one hope now is dead at last,
Since all unholpen he is gone and past :
Ah, the gods love not man, for certainly,
He to his helper did not cease to cry.'

" Nay, but thou wilt help ; they who died
before
Not single-hearted as I deem came here,
Therefore unthanked they laid their
gifts before

Thy stainless feet, still shivering with
 their fear,
 Lest in their eyes their true thought
 might appear,
 Who sought to be the lords of that fair
 town,
 Dreaded of men and winners of renown.

"O Queen, thou knowest I pray not for
 this :

O set us down together in some place
 Where not a voice can break our heaven
 of bliss,

Where nought but rocks and I can see
 her face,
 Softening beneath the marvel of thy
 grace,

Where not a foot our vanished steps can
 track—

The golden age, the golden age come
 back !

"O fairest, hear me now who do thy
 will,

Plead for thy rebel that she be not slain,
 But live and love and be thy servant
 still ;

Ah, give her joy and take away my pain,
 And thus two long-enduring servants
 gain.

An easy thing this is to do for me,
 What need of my vain words to weary
 thee.

"But none the less, this place will I not
 leave

Until I needs must go my death to meet,
 Or at thy hands some happy sign receive
 That in great joy we twain may one day
 greet

Thy presence here and kiss thy silver feet,
 Such as we deem thee, fair beyond all
 words,

Victorious o'er our servants and our
 lords."

Then from the altar back a space he
 drew,

But from the Queen turned not his face
 away,

But 'gainst a pillar leaned, until the blue
 That arched the sky, at ending of the
 day,

Was turned to ruddy gold and changing
 gray,

And clear, but low, the nigh-ebbed
 windless sea

In the still evening murmured cease-
 lessly.

And there he stood when all the sun was
 down,

Nor had he moved, when the dim golden
 light,

Like the far lustre of a godlike town,
 Had left the world to seeming hopeless
 night,

Nor would he move the more when wan
 moonlight

Streamed through the pillars for a little
 while,

And lighted up the white Queen's change-
 less smile.

Nought noted he the shallow-flowing sea
 As step by step it set the wrack a-swim ;

The yellow torchlight nothing noted he
 Wherein with fluttering gown and half-
 bared limb

The temple damsels sung their midnight
 hymn ;

And nought the doubled stillness of the
 fane

When they were gone and all was hushed
 again.

But when the waves had touched the
 marble base,

And steps the fish swim over twice a-day,
 The dawn beheld him sunken in his
 place

Upon the floor ; and sleeping there he
 lay,

Not heeding aught the little jets of spray
 The roughened sea brought nigh, across
 him cast,

For as one dead all thought from him
 had passed.

Yet long before the sun had showed his
 head,

Long ere the varied hangings on the
 wall

Had gained once more their blue and
 green and red,

He rose as one some well-known sign
 doth call

When war upon the city's gates doth
 fall,

And scarce like one fresh risen out of
 sleep,

He 'gan again his broken watch to keep.

Then he turned round ; not for the sea-
 gull's cry

That wheeled above the temple in his
 flight,

Not for the fresh south wind that lov-
 ingly

Breathed on the new-born day and dying
 night,
 But some strange hope 'twixt fear and
 great delight
 Drew round his face, now flushed, now
 pale and wan,
 And still constrained his eyes the sea to
 scan.

Now a faint light lit up the southern sky
 Not sun or moon, for all the world was
 gray,
 But this a bright cloud seemed, that
 drew anigh,
 Lighting the dull waves that beneath it
 lay
 As toward the temple still it took its
 way,
 And still grew greater, till Milanion
 Saw nought for dazzling light that round
 him shone.

But as he staggered with his arms out-
 spread,
 Delicious unnamed odors breathed
 around,
 For languid happiness he bowed his head,
 And with wet eyes sank down upon the
 ground,
 Nor wished for aught, nor any dream he
 found
 To give him reason for that happiness,
 Or make him ask more knowledge of his
 bliss.

At last his eyes were cleared, and he
 could see
 Through happy tears the goddess face to
 face
 With that faint image of Divinity,
 Whose well-wrought smile and dainty
 changeless grace
 Until that morn so gladdened all the
 place ;
 Then he, unwitting cried aloud her name
 And covered up his eyes for fear and
 shame.

But through the stillness he her voice
 could hear
 Piercing his heart with joy scarce bear-
 able,
 That said, " Milanion, wherefore dost
 thou fear,
 I am not hard to those who love me
 well ;
 List to what I a second time will tell,
 And thou mayest hear perchance, and
 live to save
 The cruel maiden from a loveless grave.

" See, by my feet three golden apples
 lie—

Such fruit among the heavy roses falls,
 Such fruit my watchful damsels care-
 fully

Store up within the best loved of my
 walls,
 Ancient Damascus, where the lover calls
 Above my unseen head, and faint and
 light
 The rose-leaves flutter round me in the
 night.

" And note, that these are not alone most
 fair

With heavenly gold, but longing strange
 they bring

Unto the hearts of men, who will not
 care

Beholding these, for any once-loved thing
 Till round the shining sides their fingers
 cling.

And thou shalt see thy well-girt swift-
 foot maid

By sight of these amidst her glory stayed.

" For bearing these within a scrip with
 thee,

When first she heads thee from the
 starting-place

Cast down the first one for her eyes to
 see,

And when she turns aside make on
 apace,

And if again she heads thee in the race
 Spare not the other two to cast aside
 If she not long enough behind will bide.

" Farewell, and when has come the
 happy time

That she Diana's raiment must unbind
 And all the world seems blessed with
 Saturn's clime,

And thou with eager arms about her
 twined

Beholdest first her gray eyes growing
 kind,

Surely, O trembler, thou shalt scarcely
 then

Forget the Helper of unhappy men."

Milanion raised his head at this last
 word

For now so soft and kind she seemed to
 be

No longer of her Godhead was he feared ;
 Too late he looked ; for nothing could
 he see

But the white image glimmering doubt-
 fully

In the departing twilight cold and gray,
And those three apples on the step that
lay.

These then he caught up quivering with
delight,
Yet fearful lest it all might be a dream ;
And though aweary with the watchful
night,
And sleepless nights of longing, still did
deem
He could not sleep ; but yet the first
sunbeam
That smote the fane across the heaving
deep
Shone on him laid in calm, untroubled
sleep.

But little ere the noontide did he rise,
And why he felt so happy scarce could
tell
Until the gleaming apples met his eyes.
Then leaving the fair place where this
befell
Oft he looked back as one who loved it
well,
Then homeward to the haunts of men,
'gan wend
To bring all things unto a happy end.

Now has the lingering month at last
gone by,
Again are all folk round the running
place,
Nor other seems the dismal pageantry
Than heretofore, but that another face
Looks o'er the smooth course ready for
the race.
For now, beheld of all, Milanion
Stands on the spot he twice has look'd
upon.

But yet—what change is this that holds
the maid ?
Does she indeed see in his glittering eye
More than disdain of the sharp shearing
blade,
Some happy hope of help and victory ?
The others seem'd to say, " We come to
die ;
Look down upon us for a little while,
That, dead, we may bethink us of thy
smile."

But he—what look of mastery was this
He cast on her ? why were his lips so red ;
Why was his face so flush'd with hap-
piness ?

So looks not one who deems himself but
dead,
E'en if to death he bows a willing head ;
So rather looks a god well pleas'd to find
Some earthly damsel fashion'd to his
mind.

Why must she drop her lids before his
gaze,
And even as she casts adown her eyes
Redden to note his eager glance of praise,
And wish that she were clad in other
guise ?
Why must the memory to her heart arise
Of things unnoticed when they first were
heard,
Some lover's song, some answering
maiden's word ?

What makes these longings, vague,
without a name,
And this vain pity never felt before,
This sudden languor, this contempt of
fame,
This tender sorrow for the time past o'er,
These doubts that grow each minnte
more and more ?
Why does she tremble as the time grows
near,
And weak defeat and woeful victory
fear ?

But while she seem'd to hear her beat-
ing heart,
Above their heads the trumpet blast rang
out
And forth they sprang, and she must
play her part ;
Then flew her white feet, knowing not a
doubt,
Though, slackening once, she turn'd her
head about,
But then she cried aloud and faster fled
Than e'er before, and all men deemed
him dead.

But with no sound he raised aloft his
hand,
And thence what seemed a ray of light
there flew
And past the maid rolled on along the
sand ;
Then trembling she her feet together
drew
And in her heart a strong desire there
grew
To have the toy ; some god she thought
had given [heaven.
That gift to her, to make of earth a

Then from the course with eager steps
 she ran,
 And in her odorous bosom laid the gold.
 But when she turned again, the great-
 limbed man,

Now well ahead she failed not to behold,
 And mindful of her glory waxing cold,
 Sprang up and followed him in hot
 pursuit,
 Though with one hand she touched the
 golden fruit.

Note too, the bow that she was wont to
 bear
 She laid aside to grasp the glittering
 prize,
 And o'er her shoulder from the quiver
 fair

Three arrows fell and lay before her eyes
 Unnoticed, as amidst the people's cries
 She sprang to head the strong Milanion,
 Who now the turning-post had well-nigh
 won.

But as he set his mighty hand on it
 White fingers underneath his own were
 laid,
 And white limbs from his dazzled eyes
 did flit,
 Then he the second fruit cast by the
 maid:

She ran awhile, and then as one afraid
 Wavered and stopped, and turned and
 made no stay,
 Until the globe with its bright fellow
 lay.

Then, as a troubled glance she cast
 around,

Now far ahead the Argive could she see,
 And in her garment's hem one hand she
 wound

To keep the double prize, and stren-
 uously

Sped o'er the course, and little doubt
 had she

To win the day, though now but scanty
 space

Was left betwixt him and the winning
 place.

Short was the way unto such winged
 feet,

Quickly she gained upon him till at last
 He turned about her eager eyes to meet
 And from his hand the third fair apple
 cast.

She wavered not, but turned and ran so
 fast

After the prize that should her bliss ful-
 fil.

That in her hand it lay ere it was still.

Nor did she rest, but turned about to
 win

Once more, an unblest woeful victory—
 And yet—and yet—why does her breath
 begin

To fail her, and her feet drag heavily?
 Why fails she now to see if far or nigh
 The goal is? why do her gray eyes grow
 dim?

Why do these tremors run through every
 limb?

She spreads her arms abroad some stay
 to find

Else must she fall, indeed, and findeth
 this,

A strong man's arms about her body
 twined.

Nor may she shudder now to feel his
 kiss,

So wrapped she is in new unbroken
 bliss:

Made happy that the foe the prize hath
 won,

She weeps glad tears for all her glory
 done.

SHATTER the trumpet, hew adown the
 posts!

Upon the brazen altar break the sword,
 And scatter incense to appease the
 ghosts

Of those who died here by their own
 award.

Bring forth the image of the mighty
 Lord,

And her who unseen o'er the runners
 hung,

And did a deed for ever to be sung.

Here are the gathered folk; make no
 delay,

Open King Schœneus' well-filled trea-
 sury,

Bring out the gifts long hid from light
 of day,

The golden bowls o'erwrought with
 imagery,

Gold chains, and unguents brought
 from over sea,

The saffron gown the old Phœnician
 brought,

Within the temple of the Goddess
 wrought.

O ye, O damsels, who shall never see
Her, that Love's servant bringeth now
to you,

Returning from another victory,
In some cool bower do all that now is
due!

Since she in token of her service new
Shall give to Venus offerings rich enow,
Her maiden zone, her arrows and her
bow. 1868.

SONG FROM THE STORY OF CUPID AND PSYCHE

O PENSIVE, tender maid, downcast and
shy,

Who turnest pale e'en at the name of
love,

And with flushed face must pass the
elm-tree by,

Ashamed to hear the passionate gray
dove

Moan to his mate, thee too the god
shall move,

Thee too the maidens shall ungird one
day,

And with thy girdle put thy shame
away.

What, then, and shall white winter
ne'er be done

Because the glittering frosty morn is
fair?

Because against the early-setting sun
Bright show the gilded boughs, though
waste and bare?

Because the robin singeth free from
care?

Ah! these are memories of a better day
When on earth's face the lips of sum-
mer lay.

Come, then, beloved one, for such as
thee

Love loveth, and their hearts he know-
eth well,

Who hoard their moments of felicity,
As misers hoard the medals that they
tell,

Lest on the earth but paupers they
should dwell:

"We hide our love to bless another day;
The world is hard, youth passes quick,"
they say.

Ah, little ones, but if ye could forget
Amidst your outpoured love that you
must die, [querors yet,

Then ye, my servants, were death's con-

And love to you should be eternity,
How quick soever might the days go by:
Yes, ye are made immortal on the day
Ye cease the dusty grains of time to
weigh.

Thou harkenest, love? O make no
semblance then

That thou art loved, but as thy custom
is

Turn thy gray eyes away from eyes of
men.

With hands down-dropped, that tremble
with thy bliss,

With hidden eyes, take thy first lover's
kiss;

Call this eternity which is to-day,
Nor dream that this our love can pass
away. 1868.

JUNE

O JUNE, O June, that we desired so,
Wilt thou not make us happy on this
day?

Across the river thy soft breezes blow
Sweet with the scent of beanfields far
away,

Above our heads rustle the aspens gray,
Calm is the sky with harmless clouds
beset,

No thought of storm the morning vexes
yet.

See, we have left our hopes and fears be-
hind

To give our very hearts up unto thee;
What better place than this then could
we find

By this sweet stream that knows not of
the sea,

That guesses not the city's misery,
This little stream whose hamlets scarce
have names,

This far-off, lonely mother of the
Thames?

Here then, O June, thy kindness will
we take;

And if indeed but pensive men we seem,
What should we do? thou wouldst not
have us wake

From out the arms of this rare happy
dream

And wish to leave the murmur of the
stream,

The rustling boughs, the twitter of the
birds,

And all thy thousand peaceful happy
words. 1868.

AUGUST

ACROSS the gap made by our English
hinds,
Amidst the Roman's handiwork, behold
Far off the long-roofed church; the
shepherd binds
The withy round the hurdles of his fold,
Down in the foss the river fed of old,
That through long lapse of time has
grown to be
The little grassy valley that you see.

Rest here awhile, not yet the eve is
still,
The bees are wandering yet, and you
may hear
The barley mowers on the trenchéd hill,
The sheep-bells, and the restless chang-
ing weir,
All little sounds made musical and clear
Beneath the sky that burning August
gives,
While yet the thought of glorious Sum-
mer lives.

Ah, love! such happy days, such days
as these,
Must we still waste them, craving for
the best,
Like lovers o'er the painted images
Of those who once their yearning hearts
have blessed?
Have we been happy on our day of
rest?
Thine eyes say "yes,"—but if it came
again,
Perchance its ending would not seem so
vain. 1868.

SONG FROM OGIER THE DANE

HÆC

In the white-flowered hawthorn brake,
Love, be merry for my sake;
Twine the blossoms in my hair,
Kiss me where I am most fair—
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth
What thing cometh after death?

ILLE

Nay, the garlanded gold hair
Hides thee where thou art most fair;
Hides the rose-tinged hills of snow—
Ah, sweet love, I have thee now!
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth
What thing cometh after death?

HÆC

Shall we weep for a dead day,
Or set Sorrow in our way?
Hidden by my golden hair,
Wilt thou weep that sweet days wear?
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth
What thing cometh after death?

ILLE

Weep, O Love, the days that flit,
Now, while I can feel thy breath;
Then may I remember it
Sad and old, and near my death.
Kiss me, love! for who knoweth
What thing cometh after death? 1868.

SONG FROM THE STORY OF ACON-
TIUS AND CYDIPPE

FAIR is the night and fair the day,
Now April is forgot of May,
Now into June May falls away;
Fair day, fair night, O give me back
The tide that all fair things did lack
Except my love, except my sweet!

Blow back, O wind! thou art not kind,
Though thou art sweet; thou hast no
mind
Her hair about my sweet to wind;
O flowery sward, though thou art bright,
I praise thee not for thy delight,
Thou hast not kissed her silver feet.

Thou know'st her not, O rustling tree,
What dost thou then to shadow me,
Whose shade her breast did never see?
O flowers, in vain ye bow adown!
Ye have not felt her odorous gown
Brush past your heads my lips to meet.

Flow on, great river—thou mayst deem
That far away, a summer stream,
Thou sawest her limbs amidst thee gleam
And kissed her foot, and kissed her knee,
Yet get thee swift unto the sea!
With nought of true thou wilt me greet.

And thou that men call by my name,
O helpless one, hast thou no shame
That thou must even look the same,
As while ago, as while ago,
When thou and she were left alone,
And hands, and lips, and tears did meet?

Grow weak and pine, lie down to die,
O body in thy misery,
Because short time and sweet goes by;

O foolish heart, how weak thou art!
 Break, break, because thou needs must
 part
 From thine own love, from thine own
 sweet! 1870.

L'ENVOI

THE EARTHLY PARADISE

HERE are we for the last time face to
 face,
 Thou and I, Book, before I bid thee speed
 Upon thy perilous journey to that place
 For which I have done on thee pilgrim's
 weed,
 Striving to get thee all things for thy
 need—

—I love thee, whatso time or men may
 say
 Of the poor singer of an empty day.

Good reason why I love thee, e'en
 if thou
 Be mocked or clean forgot as time wears
 on;

For ever as thy fashioning did grow,
 Kind word and praise because of thee I
 won

From those without whom were my
 world all gone,
 My hope fallen dead, my singing cast
 away,
 And I set soothly in an empty day.

I love thee; yet this last time must it be
 That thou must hold thy peace and I
 must speak,

Lest if thou babble I begin to see
 Thy gear too thin, thy limbs and heart
 too weak,

To find the land thou goest forth to
 seek—

—Though what harm if thou die upon
 the way,
 Thou idle singer of an empty day?

But though this land desired thou never
 reach,

Yet folk who know it mayst thou meet,
 or death;

Therefore a word unto thee would I teach
 To answer these, who, noting thy weak
 breath,

Thy wandering eyes, thy heart of little
 faith,

May make thy fond desire a sport and
 play

Mocking the singer of an empty day.

That land's name, say'st thou? and the
 road thereto?

Nay, Book, thou mockest, saying thou
 know'st it not;

Surely no book of verse I ever knew
 But ever was the heart within him hot
 To gain the Land of Matters Unforgot—
 —There, now we both laugh—as the
 whole world may,

At us poor singers of an empty day.

Nay, let it pass, and harken! Hast
 thou heard

That therein I believe I have a friend,
 Of whom for love I may not be afeard?
 It is to him indeed I bid thee wend;
 Yea, he perchance may meet thee ere
 thou end,

Dying so far off from the hedge of bay,
 Thou idle singer of an empty day!

Well, think of him, I bid thee, on the
 road,

And if it hap that midst of thy defeat,
 Fainting beneath thy follies' heavy load,
 My Master, GEOFFREY CHAUCER, thou
 do meet,

Then shalt thou win a space of rest full
 sweet;

Then be thou bold, and speak the words
 I say,

The idle singer of an empty day!

“O Master, O thou great of heart and
 tongue,

Thou well mayst ask me why I wander
 here,

In raiment rent of stories oft besung!
 But of thy gentleness draw thou anear,
 And then the heart of one who held thee
 dear

Mayst thou behold! So near as that I lay
 Unto the singer of an empty day.

“For this he ever said, who sent me
 forth

To seek a place amid thy company;
 That howsoever little was my worth,
 Yet was he worth e'en just so much as
 I;

He said that rhyme hath little skill to
 lie;

Nor feigned to cast his worser part away;
 In idle singing for an empty day.

“I have beheld him tremble oft enough
 At things he could not choose but trust
 to me,

Although he knew the world was wise
 and rough;

And never did he fail to let me see
His love,—his folly and faithlessness,
maybe;
And still in turn I gave him voice to pray
Such prayers as cling about an empty
day.

"Thou, keen-eyed, reading me, mayst
read him through,
For surely little is there left behind;
No power great deeds unnameable to do;
No knowledge for which words he may
not find,
No love of things as vague as autumn
wind—
—Earth of the earth lies hidden by my
clay,
The idle singer of an empty day!

"Children we twain are, saith he, late
made wise
In love, but in all else most childish
still,
And seeking still the pleasure of our eyes,
And what our ears with sweetest sounds
may fill;
Not fearing Love, lest these things he
should kill;
Howe'er his pain by pleasure doth he lay,
Making a strange tale of an empty day.

"Death have we hated, knowing not
what it meant;
Life have we loved, through green leaf
and through sere,
Though still the less we knew of its in-
tent;
The Earth and Heaven through countless
year on year,
Slow changing, were to us but curtains
fair,
Hung round about a little room, where
play
Weeping and laughter of man's empty
day.

"O Master, if thine heart could love us
yet,
Spite of things left undone, and wrongly
done,
Some place in loving hearts then should
we get,
For thou, sweet-souled, didst never
stand alone,
But knew'st the joy and woe of many an
one—
—By lovers dead, who live through thee,
we pray,
Help thou us singers of an empty day!"

Fearest thou, Book, what answer thou
mayst gain
Lest he should scorn thee, and thereof
thou die?
Nay, it shall not be.—Thou mayst toil
in vain,
And never draw the House of Fame
anigh;
Yet he and his shall know whereof we
cry,
Shall call it not ill done to strive to lay
The ghosts that crowd about life's
empty day.

Then let the others go! and if indeed
In some old garden thou and I have
wrought,
And made fresh flowers spring up from
hoarded seed,
And fragrance of old days and deeds
have brought
Back to folk weary; all was not for
nought.
—No little part it was for me to play—
The idle singer of an empty day. 1870.

THE SEASONS

Spring. Spring am I, too soft of heart
Much to speak ere I depart:
Ask the Summer-tide to prove
The abundance of my love.

Summer. Summer looked for long am I,
Much shall change or e'er I die
Prithee take it not amiss
Though I weary thee with bliss.

Autumn. Laden Autumn here I stand
Worn of heart, and weak of hand:
Nought but rest seems good to me,
Speak the word that sets me free.

Winter. I am Winter, that do keep
Longing safe amidst of sleep:
Who shall say if I were dead
What should be remembered? 1871.

ERROR AND LOSS ¹

UPON an eve I sat me down and wept,
Because the world to me seemed nowise
good;
Still autumn was it, and the meadows
slept,
The misty hills dreamed, and the silent
wood [mood;
Seemed listening to the sorrow of my

¹ Originally with the title *The Dark Wood*.

I knew not if the earth with me did
grieve,
Or if it mock'd my grief that bitter eve.

Then 'twixt my tears a maiden did I see,
Who drew anigh me on the leaf-strewn
grass,
Then stood and gazed upon me pitifully
With grief-worn eyes, until my woe did
pass
From me to her, and tearless now I was,
And she mid tears was asking me of one
She long had sought unaided and alone.

I knew not of him, and she turned away
Into the dark wood, and my own great
pain
Still held me there, till dark had slain
the day,
And perished at the gray dawn's hand
again;
Then from the wood a voice cried: "Ah,
in vain,
In vain I seek thee, O thou bitter-sweet!
In what lone land are set thy longed-for
feet?"

Then I looked up, and lo, a man there
came
From midst the trees, and stood regard-
ing me
Until my tears were dried for very
shame;
Then he cried out: "O mourner, where
is she
Whom I have sought o'er every land and
sea?
I love her and she loveth me, and still
We meet no more than green hill meet-
eth hill."

With that he passed on sadly, and I knew
That these had met and missed in the
dark night,
Blinded by blindness of the world untrue,
That hideth love and maketh wrong of
right.
Then midst my pity for their lost delight,
Yet more with barren longing I grew
weak,
Yet more I mourned that I had none to
seek, 1871.

THE DAY OF LOVE

(From LOVE IS ENOUGH)

DAWN talks to-day
Over dew-gleaming flowers,

Night flies away
Till the resting of hours:
Fresh are thy feet
And with dreams thine eyes glis-
tening,
Thy still lips are sweet
Though the world is a-listening.
O Love, set a word in my mouth for our
meeting,
Cast thine arms round about me to stay
my heart's beating!
O fresh day, O fair day, O long day
made ours!

Morn shall meet noon
While the flower-stems yet move,
Though the wind dieth soon
And the clouds fade above.
Loved lips are thine
As I tremble and harken;
Bright thine eyes shine,
Though the leaves thy brow darken.
O Love, kiss me into silence, lest no word
avail me,
Stay my head with thy bosom lest breath
and life fail me!
O sweet day, O rich day, made long for
our love!

Late day shall greet eve,
And the full blossoms shake,
For the wind will not leave
The tall trees while they wake.
Eyes soft with bliss,
Come nigher and nigher!
Sweet mouth I kiss,
Tell me all thy desire!
Let us speak, love, together some words
of our story,
That our lips as they part may remember
the glory!
O soft day, O calm day, made clear for
our sake!

Eve shall kiss night,
And the leaves stir like rain
As the wind stealeth light
O'er the grass of the plain.
Unseen are thine eyes
Mid the dreamy night's sleeping,
And on my mouth there lies
The dear rain of thy weeping.
Hold, silence, love, speak not of the
sweet day departed,
Cling close to me, love, lest I waken sad
hearted!
O kind day, O dear day, short day,
come again! 1873.

FINAL CHORUS

(From LOVE IS ENOUGH)

LOVE is enough : ho ye who seek saving,
Go no further ; come hither ; there
have been who have found it,
And these know the House of Fulfilment
of Craving ;

These know the Cup with the roses
around it,

These know the World's Wound and
the balm that hath bound it :

Cry out, the World heedeth not, " Love,
lead us home ! "

He leadeth, He harkeneth, He cometh
to you-ward ;

Set your faces as steel to the fears that
assemble

Round his goad for the faint, and his
scourge for the froward :

Lo his lips, how with tales of last kisses
they tremble !

Lo his eyes of all sorrow that may not
dissemble !

Cry out, for he heedeth, " O Love, lead
us home ! "

O harken the words of his voice of com-
passion :

" Come cling round about me, ye faith-
ful who sicken

Of the weary unrest and the world's
passing fashion !

As the rain in mid-morning your
troubles shall thicken,

But surely within you some Godhead
doth quicken,

As ye cry to me heeding, and leading
you home.

" Come—pain ye shall have, and be blind
to the ending !

Come—fear ye shall have, mid the
sky's overcasting !

Come—change ye shall have, for far are
ye wending !

Come—no crown ye shall have for your
thirst and your fasting,

But the kissed lips of Love and fair
life everlasting !

Cry out, for one heedeth, who leadeth
you home ! "

Is he gone? was he with us?—ho ye
who seek saving,

Go no further ; come hither ; for have
we not found it ?

Here is the House of Fulfilment of Crav-
ing ;

Here is the Cup with the roses around
it ;

The World's Wound well healed, and
the balm that hath bound it :

Cry out ! for he heedeth, fair Love that
led home. 1873.

THE VOICE OF TOIL

I HEARD men saying, Leave hope and
praying,

All days shall be as all have been ;

To-day and to-morrow bring fear and
sorrow,

The never ending toil between.

When Earth was younger mid toil and
hunger,

In hope we strove, and our hands were
strong ;

Then great men led us, with words they
fed us,

And bade us right the earthly wrong.

Go read in story their deeds and glory,
Their names amidst the nameless dead ;

Turn then from lying to us slow-dying
In that good world to which they led ;

Where fast and faster our iron master,
The thing we made, for ever drives,

Bids us grind treasure and fashion pleas-
ure

For other hopes and other lives.

Where home is a hovel and dull we
grovel,

Forgetting that the world is fair ;

Where no babe we cherish, lest its very
soul perish ;

Where mirth is crime, and love a snare.

Who now shall lead us, what god shall
heed us

As we lie in the hell our hands have won ?
For us are no rulers but fools and be-

foolers,

The great are fallen, the wise men gone.

I heard men saying, Leave tears and
praying,

The sharp knife heedeth not the sheep ;
Are we not stronger than the rich and

the wronger,

When day breaks over dreams and sleep !

Come, shoulder to shoulder, ere the
world grows older!
Help lies in nought but thee and me:
Hope is before us, the long years that
bore us
Bore leaders more than men may be.

Let dead hearts tarry and trade and
marry,
And trembling nurse their dreams of
mirth.
While we the living our lives are giving
To bring the bright new world to birth.

Come, shoulder to shoulder, ere earth
grows older!
The cause spreads over land and sea;
Now the world shaketh, and fear
awaketh,
And joy at last for thee and me.

1884.

NO MASTER

Saith man to man, We've heard and
known

That we no master need
To live upon this earth our own,
In fair and manly deed.
The grief of slaves long passed away
For us hath forged the chain,
Till now each worker's patient day
Builds up the House of Pain.

And we, shall we too, crouch and quail,
Ashamed, afraid of strife,
And lest our lives untimely fail
Embrace the Death in Life?
Nay, cry aloud, and have no fear,
We few against the world;
Awake, arise! the hope we bear
Against the curse is hurled.

It grows and grows—are we the same,
The feeble band, the few?
Or what are these with eyes aflame,
And hands to deal and do?
This is the host that bears the word,
"NO MASTER HIGH OR LOW"—
A lightning flame, a shearing sword.
A storm to overthrow.

1884.

THE DAY IS COMING

Come hither, lads, and harken, for a tale
there is to tell,
Of the wonderful days a-coming, when
all shall be better than well.

And the tale shall be told of a country,
a land in the midst of the sea,
And folk shall call it England in the
days that are going to be.

There more than one in a thousand in
the days that are yet to come,
Shall have some hope of the morrow,
some joy of the ancient home.

For then, laugh not, but listen to this
strange tale of mine,
All folk that are in England shall be
better lodged than swine.

Then a man shall work and bethink him,
and rejoice in the deeds of his
hand,
Nor yet come home in the even too faint
and weary to stand.

Men in that time a-coming shall work
and have no fear
For to-morrow's lack of earning and the
hunger-wolf anear.

I tell you this for a wonder, that no
man then shall be glad
Of his fellow's fall and mishap to snatch
at the work he had.

For that which the worker winneth shall
then be his indeed,
Nor shall half be reaped for nothing by
him that sowed no seed.

O strange new wonderful justice! But
for whom shall we gather the gain?
For ourselves and for each of our fellows,
and no hand shall labor in vain.

Then all Mine and all Thine shall be Ours,
and no more shall any man crave
For riches that serve for nothing but to
fetter a friend for a slave.

And what wealth then shall be left us
when none shall gather gold
To buy his friend in the market, and
pinch and pine the sold?

Nay, what save the lovely city, and the
little house on the hill,
And the wastes and the woodland beauty,
and the happy fields we till;

And the homes of ancient stories, the
tombs of the mighty dead;
And the wise men seeking out marvels,
and the poet's teeming head;

And the painter's hand of wonder; and
the marvelous fiddle-bow,
And the banded choirs of music: all
those that do and know.

For all these shall be ours and all men's;
nor shall any lack a share
Of the toil and the gain of living in the
days when the world grows fair.

Ah! such are the days that shall be! But
what are the deeds of to-day,
In the days of the years we dwell in,
that wear our lives away?

Why, then, and for what are we wait-
ing? There are three words to
speak;

WE WILL IT, and what is the foeman
but the dream-strong wakened
and weak?

O why and for what are we waiting?
while our brothers droop and die,
And on every wind of the heavens a
wasted life goes by.

How long shall they reproach us where
crowd on crowd they dwell,
Poor ghosts of the wicked city, the gold-
crushed, hungry hell?

Through squalid life they labored, in
sordid grief they died,
Those sons of a mighty mother, those
props of England's pride.

They are gone; there is none can undo
it, nor save our souls from the
curse;

But many a million cometh, and shall
they be better or worse?

It is we must answer and hasten, and
open wide the door
For the rich man's hurrying terror, and
the slow-foot hope of the poor.

Yea, the voiceless wrath of the
wretched, and their unlearned dis-
content,

We must give it voice and wisdom till
the waiting-tide be spent.

Come, then, since all things call us, the
living and the dead,

And o'er the weltering tangle a glim-
mering light is shed.

Come, then, let us cast off fooling, and
put by ease and rest,
For the Cause alone is worthy till the
good days bring the best.

Come, join in the only battle wherein no
man can fail,
Where whoso fadeth and dieth, yet his
deed shall still prevail.

Ah! come, cast off all fooling, for this
at least, we know:
That the Dawn and the Day is coming
and forth the Banners go. 1885

THE DAYS THAT WERE

(MOTTO OF THE HOUSE OF THE WOLFINGS)

WHILES in the early winter eve
We pass amid the gathering night
Some homestead that we had to leave
Years past; and see its candles bright
Shine in the room beside the door
Where we were merry years ago,
But now must never enter more,
As still the dark road drives us on.
E'en so the world of men may turn
At even of some hurried day
And see the ancient glimmer burn
Across the waste that hath no way;
Then, with that faint light in its eyes,
Awhile I bid it linger near
And nurse in waving memories
The bitter sweet of days that were.
1889.

THE DAY OF DAYS

EACH eve earth falleth down the dark,
As though its hope were o'er;
Yet lurks the sun when day is done
Behind to-morrow's door.

Gray grows the dawn while men-folk
sleep,
Unseen spreads on the light,
Till the thrush sings to the colored
things,
And earth forgets the night.

No otherwise wends on our Hope:
E'en as a tale that's told
Are fair lives lost, and all the cost
Of wise and true and bold.

We've toiled and failed; we spake the
word;
None harkened; dumb we lie;
Our Hope is dead, the seed we spread
Fell o'er the earth to die.

What's this? For joy our hearts stand
still,
And life is loved and dear,
The lost and found the Cause hath
crowned,
The Day of Days is here. 1890.

THE BURGHERS' BATTLE

THICK rise the spear-shafts o'er the land
That erst the harvest bore ;
The sword is heavy in the hand,
And we return no more.
The light wind waves the Ruddy Fox,
Our banner of the war,
And ripples in the Running Ox,
And we return no more.
Across our stubble acres now
The teams go four and four ;
But out-worn elders guide the plough,
And we return no more.
And now the women heavy-eyed
Turn through the open door
From gazing down the highway wide,
Where we return no more.
The shadows of the fruited close
Dapple the feast-hall floor ;
There lie our dogs and dream and doze,
And we return no more.
Down from the minster tower to-day
Fall the soft chimings of yore
Amidst the chattering jackdaws' play :
And we return no more.
But underneath the streets are still ;
Noon, and the market's o'er !
Back go the goodwives o'er the hill ;
For we return no more.
What merchant to our gates shall come ?
What wise man bring us lore ?
What abbot ride away to Rome,
Now we return no more ?
What mayor shall rule the hall we built ?
Whose scarlet sweep the floor ?
What judge shall doom the robber's
guilt,
Now we return no more ?
New houses in the streets shall rise
Where builded we before,
Of other stone wrought otherwise ;
For we return no more.
And crops shall cover field and hill
Unlike what once they bore,
And all be done without our will,
Now we return no more.
Look up ! the arrows streak the sky,
The horns of battle roar ;
The long spears lower and draw nigh,
And we return no more.
Remember how beside the wain,

We spoke the word of war,
And sowed this harvest of the plain,
And we return no more.
Lay spears about the Ruddy Fox !
The days of old are o'er ;
Heave sword about the Running Ox !
For we return no more. 1891.

AGNES AND THE HILL-MAN

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH

AGNES went through the meadows a-
weeping,
Fowl are a-singing.
There stood the hill-man heed thereof
keeping.
Agnes, fair Agnes !
"Come to the hill, fair Agnes, with me,
The reddest of gold will I give unto
thee !"

Twice went Agnes the hill round about,
Then wended within, left the fair world
without.

In the hillside bode Agnes, three years
thrice told o'er,
For the green earth sithence fell she
longing full sore.

There she sat, and lullaby sang in her
singing,
And she heard how the bells of England
were ringing.

Agnes before her true-love did stand :
"May I wend to the church of the Eng-
lish Land ?"

"To England's Church well mayst thou
be gone,
So that no hand thou lay the red gold
upon.

"So that when thou art come the church-
yard anear
Thou cast not abroad thy golden hair.

"So that when thou standest the church
within
To thy mother on bench thou never win.

"So that when thou hearest the high
God's name,
No knee unto earth thou bow to the
same."

Hand she laid on all gold that was there,
And cast abroad her golden hair.

And when the church she stood within
To her mother on bench straight did she
win.

And when she heard the high God's
name,
Knee unto earth she bowed to the same.

When all the mass was sung to its end
Home with her mother dear did she
wend.

"Come, Agnes, into the hillside to me,
For thy seven small sons greet sorely for
thee!"

"Let them greet, let them greet, as
they will have to do;
For never again will I hearken thereto!"

Weird laid he on her, sore sickness he
wrought,
Fowl are a-singing.
That self-same hour to death was she
brought.
Agnes, fair Agnes. 1891.

ICELAND FIRST SEEN

Lo from our loitering ship a new land at
last to be seen;
Toothed rocks down the side of the firth
on the east guard a weary wide lea,
And black slope the hill-sides above,
striped adown with their desolate
green:
And a peak rises up on the west from
the meeting of cloud and of sea,
Foursquare from base unto point like
the building of Gods that have been,
The last of that waste of the mountains
all cloud-wreathed and snow-flecked
and gray,
And bright with the dawn that began
just now at the ending of day.

Ah! what came we forth for to see that
our hearts are so hot with desire?
Is it enough for our rest the sight of this
desolate strand,
And the mountain-waste voiceless as
death but for winds that may sleep not
nor tire?

Why do we long to wend forth through
the length and breadth of a land,
Dreadful with grinding of ice, and
record of scarce hidden fire,

But that there 'mid the gray grassy dales
sore scarred by the ruining streams
Lives the tale of the Northland of old
and the undying glory of dreams?

O land, as some cave by the sea where
the treasures of old have been laid,
The sword it may be of a king whose
name was the turning of fight;
Or the staff of some wise of the world
that many things made and unmade.
Or the ring of a woman maybe whose
woe is grown wealth and delight.
No wheat and no wine grows above it,
no orchard for blossom and shade;
The few ships that sail by its blackness
but deem it the mouth of a grave;
Yet sure when the world shall awaken,
this too shall be mighty to save.

Or rather, O land, if a marvel it seemeth
that men ever sought
Thy wastes for a field and a garden ful-
filled of all wonder and doubt,
And feasted amidst of the winter when
the fight of the year had been fought,
Whose plunder all gathered together
was little to babble about:
Cry aloud from thy wastes, O thou
land, "Not for this nor for that was I
wrought
Amid waning of realms and of riches
and death of things worshipped and
sure,
I abide here the spouse of a God, and I
made and I make and endure."

O Queen of the grief without know-
ledge, of the courage that may not
avail,
Of the longing that may not attain, of
the love that shall never forget,
More joy than the gladness of laughter
thy voice hath amidst of its wail:
More hope than of pleasure fulfilled
amidst of thy blindness is set;
More glorious than gaining of all, thine
unfaltering hand that shall fail:
For what is the mark on thy brow but
the brand that thy Brynhild doth
bear?
Lone once, and loved and undone by a
love that no ages outwear.

Ah! when thy Balder comes back, and
bears from the heart of the Sun,
Peace and the healing of pain, and the
wisdom that waiteth no more;
And the lilies are laid on thy brow

'mid the crown of the deeds thou
hast done;
And the roses spring up by thy feet that
the rocks of the wilderness wore.
Ah! when thy Balder comes back and
we gather the gains he hath won,
Shall we not linger a little to talk of thy
sweetness of old,
Yea, turn back awhile to thy travail
whence the gods stood aloof to be-
hold?
1891.

TO THE MUSE OF THE NORTH

O MUSE that swayest the sad Northern
Song,
Thy right hand full of smiting and of
wrong,
Thy left hand holding pity; and thy
breast
Heaving with hope of that so certain
rest:
Thou, with the gray eyes kind and un-
afraid,
The soft lips trembling not, though they
have said
The doom of the World and those that
dwell therein.
The lips that smile not though thy
children win
The fated Love that draws the fated
Death.
O, borne adown the fresh stream of thy
breath,
Let some word reach my ears and touch
my heart,
That, if it may be, I may have a part

In that great sorrow of thy children
dead
That vexed the brow, and bowed adown
the head,
Whitened the hair, made life a won-
drous dream,
And death the murmur of a restful
stream,
But left no stain upon those souls of
thine
Whose greatness through the tangled
world doth shine.
O Mother, and Love and Sister all in
one,
Come thou; for sure I am enough alone
That thou thine arms about my heart
shouldst throw,
And wrap me in the grief of long ago.
1891.

DRAWING NEAR THE LIGHT

Lo, when we wade the tangled wood,
In haste and hurry to be there,
Nought seem its leaves and blossoms
good,
For all that they be fashioned fair.
But looking up, at last we see
The glimmer of the open light,
From o'er the place where we would be;
Then grow the very brambles bright.
So now, amidst our day of strife,
With many a matter glad we play,
When once we see the light of life
Gleam through the tangle of to-day.
1891.

SWINBURNE

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SWINBURNE

A SONG IN TIME OF ORDER

1852

PUSH hard across the sand,
For the salt wind gathers breath;
Shoulder and wrist and hand,
Push hard as the push of death.

The wind is as iron that rings,
The foam-heads loosen and flee;
It swells and welters and swings,
The pulse of the tide of the sea.

And up on the yellow cliff
The long corn flickers and shakes;
Push, for the wind holds stiff,
And the gunwale dips and rakes.

Good hap to the fresh fierce weather,
The quiver and beat of the sea!
While three men hold together
The kingdoms are less by three.

Out to the sea with her there,
Out with her over the sand,
Let the kings keep the earth for their
share!
We have done with the sharers of
land.

They have tied the world in a tether,
They have bought over God with a
fee;
While three men hold together,
The kingdoms are less by three.

We have done with the kisses that sting,
The thief's mouth red from the feast,
The blood on the hands of the king,
And the lie at the lips of the priest.

Will they tie the winds in a tether,
Put a bit in the jaws of the sea?
While three men hold together,
The kingdoms are less by three.

Let our flag run out straight in the wind!
The old red shall be floated again

When the ranks that are thin shall be
thinned,
When the names that were twenty
are ten;

When the devil's riddle is mastered
And the galley-bench creaks with a
Pope,
We shall see Buonaparte the bastard
Kick heels with his throat in a rope.

While the shepherd sets wolves on his
sheep
And the emperor halters his Kine,
While Shame is a watchman asleep
And Faith is a keeper of swine.

Let the wind shake our flag like a
feather,
Like the plumes of the foam of the
sea!

While three men hold together,
The kingdoms are less by three.

All the world has its burdens to bear,
From Cayenne to the Austrian
whips;
Forth, with the rain in our hair
And the salt sweet foam in our lips:

In the teeth of the hard glad weather,
In the blown wet face of the sea;
While three men hold together,
The kingdoms are less by three.
1862.

CHORUSES FROM ATALANTA IN CALYDON

THE YOUTH OF THE YEAR

WHEN the hounds of spring are on
winter's traces,
The mother of months in meadow or
plain
Fills the shadows and windy places
With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain;

And the brown bright nightingale amorous
Is half assuaged for Itylus,
For the Thracian ships and the foreign
faces,

The tongueless vigil, and all the pain.

Come with bows bent and with emptying
of quivers,
Maiden most perfect, lady of light,
With a noise of winds and many rivers,
With a clamor of waters, and with
might;

Bind on thy sandals, O thou most fleet,
Over the splendor and speed of thy feet;
For the faint east quickens, the wan
west shivers,

Round the feet of the day and the feet
of the night.

Where shall we find her, how shall we
sing to her,

Fold our hands round her knees, and
cling?

O that man's heart were as fire and could
spring to her,

Fire, or the strength of the streams
that spring!

For the stars and the winds are unto her
As raiment, as songs of the harp-player;
For the risen stars and the fallen cling
to her,

And the southwest-wind and the west-
wind sing.

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;

The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that
wins;

And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

The full streams feed on flower of rushes,
Ripe grasses trammel a travelling foot,
The faint fresh flame of the young year
flushes

From leaf to flower and flower to fruit;
And fruit and leaf are as gold and fire,
And the oat is heard above the lyre,
And the hoofed heel of a satyr crushes
The chestnut-husk at the chestnut
root.

And Pan by noon and Bacchus by night,
Fleeter of foot than the fleet-foot kid,
Follows with dancing and fills with de-
light

The Mænad and the Bassarid;
And soft as lips that laugh and hide
The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
And screen from seeing and leave in
sight

The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

The ivy falls with the Bacchanal's hair
Over her eyebrows hiding her eyes;
The wild vine slipping down leaves
bare

Her bright breast shortening into
sighs;

The wild vine slips with the weight of
its leaves,

But the berried ivy catches and cleaves
To the limbs that glitter, the feet that
scare

The wolf that follows, the fawn that
flies.

THE LIFE OF MAN

Before the beginning of years,
There came to the making of man

Time, with a gift of tears;
Grief, with a glass that ran;

Pleasure, with pain for leaven;
Summer, with flowers that fell;

Remembrance fallen from heaven,
And madness risen from hell;

Strength without hands to smite;
Love that endures for a breath;

Night, the shadow of light,
And life, the shadow of death.

And the high gods took in hand
Fire, and the falling of tears,

And a measure of sliding sand
From under the feet of the years;

And froth and drift of the sea;
And dust of the laboring earth;

And bodies of things to be
In the houses of death and of birth;

And wrought with weeping and laughter
And fashioned with loathing and love,

With life before and after
And death beneath and above,

For a day and a night and a morrow,
That his strength might endure for a
span

With travail and heavy sorrow,
The holy spirit of man.

From the winds of the north and the
south

They gathered as unto strife;
They breathed upon his mouth,

They filled his body with life;

Eyesight and speech they wrought
 For the veils of the soul therein,
 A time for labor and thought,
 A time to serve and to sin ;
 They gave him light in his ways,
 And love, and a space for delight,
 And beauty and length of days,
 And night, and sleep in the night.
 His speech is a burning fire ;
 With his lips he travaileth ;
 In his heart is a blind desire,
 In his eyes foreknowledge of death ;
 He weaves, and is clothed with derision ;
 Sows, and he shall not reap ;
 His life is a watch or a vision
 Between a sleep and a sleep.

LOVE AND LOVE'S MATES

We have seen thee, O Love, thou art
 fair ; thou art goodly, O Love ;
 Thy wings make light in the air as the
 wings of a dove.
 Thy feet are as winds that divide the
 stream of the sea ;
 Earth is thy covering to hide thee, the
 garment of thee.
 Thou art swift and subtle and blind as a
 flame of fire ;
 Before thee the laughter, behind thee the
 tears of desire ;
 And twain go forth beside thee, a man
 with a maid ;
 Her eyes are the eyes of a bride whom
 delight makes afraid ;
 As the breath in the buds that stir is her
 bridal breath :
 But Fate is the name of her ; and his
 name is Death.

NATURE

O that I now, I too were
 By deep wells and water-floods,
 Streams of ancient hills, and where
 All the wan green places bear
 Blossoms cleaving to the sod,
 Fruitless fruit, and grasses fair,
 Or such darkest ivy-buds
 As divide thy yellow hair,
 Bacchus, and their leaves that nod
 Round thy fawnskin brush the bare
 Snow-soft shoulders of a god ;
 There the year is sweet, and there
 Earth is full of secret springs,
 And the fervent rose-cheeked hours,
 Those that marry dawn and noon,
 There are sunless, there look pale
 In dim leaves and hidden air,

Pale as grass or latter flowers,
 Or the wild vine's wan wet rings
 Full of dew beneath the moon,
 And all day the nightingale
 Sleeps, and all night sings ;
 There in cold remote recesses
 That nor alien eyes assail,
 Feet, nor imminence of wings,
 Nor a wind nor any tune,
 Thou, O queen and holiest,
 Flower the whitest of all things.
 With reluctant lengthening tresses
 And with sudden splendid breast
 Save of maidens unbelolden,
 There art wont to enter, there
 Thy divine swift limbs and golden
 Maiden growth of unbound hair,
 Bathed in waters white,
 Shine, and many a maid's by thee
 In moist woodland or the hilly
 Flowerless brakes where wells abound
 Out of all men's sight ;
 Or in lower pools that see
 All their margins clothed all round
 With the innumerable lily,
 Whence the golden-girdled bee
 Flits through flowering rush to fret
 White or duskier violet,
 Fair as those that in far years
 With their buds left luminous
 And their little leaves made wet
 From the warmer dew of tears,
 Mother's tears in extreme need,
 Hid the limbs of Iamus,
 Of thy brother's seed ;
 For his heart was piteous
 Toward him, even as thine heart now
 Pitiful toward us ;
 Thine, O goddess, turning hither
 A benignant blameless brow ;
 Seeing enough of evil done
 And lives withered as leaves wither
 In the blasting of the sun ;
 Seeing enough of hunters dead,
 Ruin enough of all our year,
 Herds and harvest slain and shed,
 Herdsmen stricken many an one,
 Fruits and flocks consumed together,
 And great length of deadly days.
 Yet with reverent lips and fear
 Turn we toward thee, turn and praise
 For this lightening of clear weather
 And prosperities begun.
 For not seldom, when all air
 As bright water without breath
 Shines, and when men fear not, fate
 Without thunder unaware
 Breaks, and brings down death.
 Joy with grief ye great gods give,

Good with bad, and overbear
 All the pride of us that live,
 All the high estate,
 As ye long since overbore,
 As in old time long before,
 Many a strong man and a great,
 All that were.
 But do thou, sweet, otherwise,
 Having heed of all our prayer,
 Taking note of all our sighs ;
 We beseech thee by thy light,
 By thy bow, and thy sweet eyes,
 And the kingdom of the night,
 Be thou favorable and fair ;
 By thine arrows and thy might
 And Orion overthrown ;
 By the maiden thy delight,
 By the indissoluble zone
 And the sacred hair.

FATE

Not as with sundering of the earth
 Nor as with cleaving of the sea
 Nor fierce foreshadowings of a birth
 Nor flying dreams of death to be,
 Nor loosening of a large world's girth
 And quickening of the body of night,
 And sound of thunder in men's ears
 And fire of lightning in men's sight,
 Fate, mother of desires and fears,
 Bore unto men the law of tears ;
 But sudden, an unfatiered flame,
 And broken out of night, she shone,
 She, without body, without name,
 In days forgotten and foregone ;
 And heaven rang round her as she came
 Like smitten cymbals, and lay bare ;
 Clouds and great stars, thunders and
 snows,
 The blue sad fields and folds of air,
 The life that breathes, the life that
 grows,
 All wind, all fire, that burns or blows,
 Even all these knew her : for she is great ;
 The daughter of doom, the mother of
 death,
 The sister of sorrow ; a lifelong weight
 That no man's finger lighteneth,
 Nor any god can lighten fate ;
 A landmark seen across the way
 Where one race treads as the other
 trod ;
 An evil sceptre, an evil stay,
 Wrought for a staff, wrought for a rod,
 The bitter jealousy of God.

For death is deep as the sea,
 And fate as the waves thereof.

Shall the waves take pity on thee
 Or the south-wind offer thee love ?
 Wilt thou take the night for thy day
 Or the darkness for light on thy way
 Till thou say in thine heart, Enough ?

Behold, thou art over fair, thou art
 over wise ;
 The sweetness of spring in thine hair,
 and the light in thine eyes.
 The light of the spring in thine eyes,
 and the sound in thine ears ;
 Yet thine heart shall wax heavy with
 sighs and thine eyelids with tears.
 Wilt thou cover thine hair with gold ;
 and with silver thy feet ?
 Hast thou taken the purple to fold thee,
 and made thy mouth sweet ?
 Behold, when thy face is made bare, he
 that loved thee shall hate ;
 Thy face shall be no more fair at the
 fall of thy fate.
 For thy life shall fall as a leaf and be
 shed as the rain ;
 And the veil of thine head shall be grief ;
 and the crown shall be pain.

THE DEATH OF MELEAGER

Meleager. Let your hands meet
 Round the weight of my head,
 Lift ye my feet
 As the feet of the dead ;
 For the flesh of my body is molten, the
 limbs of it molten as lead.

Chorus. O thy luminous face,
 Thine imperious eyes !
 O the grief, O the grace,
 As of day when it dies !
 Who is this bending over thee, lord, with
 tears and suppression of sighs !

Meleager. Is a bride so fair ?
 Is a maid so meek ?
 With unchapleted hair,
 With unfilleted cheek.
Atalanta, the pure among women, whose
 name is as blessing to speak.

Atalanta. I would that with feet,
 Unsandalled, unshod,
 Overbold, overfleet,
 I had swum not nor trod
 From Arcadia to Calydon, northward, a
 blast of the envy of God.

Meleager. Unto each man his fate ;
 Unto each as he saith

In whose fingers the weight
Of the world is as breath;
Yet I would that in clamor of battle
mine hands had laid hold upon
death.

Chorus. Not with cleaving of shields
And their clash in thine ear,
When the lord of fought fields
Breaketh spearshaft from spear,
Thou art broken, our lord, thou art
broken, with travail and labor
and fear.

Meleager. Would God he had found me
Beneath fresh boughs!
Would God he had bound me
Unawares in mine house,
With light in mine eyes and songs in my
lips, and a crown on my brows!

Chorus. Whence art thou sent from us?
Whither thy goal?
How art thou rent from us,
Thou that wert whole,
As with severing of eyelids and eyes, as
with sundering of body and soul!

Meleager. My heart is within me
As an ash in the fire;
Whosoever hath seen me,
Without lute, without lyre,
Shall sing of me grievous things, even
things that were ill to desire.

Chorus. Who shall raise thee
From the house of the dead?
Or what man praise thee
That thy praise may be said?
Alas thy beauty! alas thy body! alas
thine head!

Meleager. But thou, O mother,
That dreamer of dreams,
Wilt thou bring forth another
To feel the sun's beams
When I move among shadows a shadow,
and wail by impassable streams?

Ceneus. What thing wilt thou leave me
Now this thing is done?
A man wilt thou give me,
A son for my son,
For the light of mine eyes, the desire of
my life, the desirable one?

Chorus. Thou wert glad above others,
Yea, fair beyond word;
Thou wert glad among mothers;

For each man that heard
Of thee, praise there was added unto thee,
as wings to the feet of a bird.

Ceneus. Who shall give back
Thy face of old years,
With travail made black,
Grown gray among fears,
Mother of sorrow, mother of cursing
mother of tears?

Meleager. Though thou art as fire
Fed with fuel in vain,
My delight, my desire,
Is more chaste than the rain,
More pure than the dewfall, more holy
than stars are that live without
stain.

Atalanta. I would that as water
My life's blood had thawed,
Or as winter's wan daughter
Leaves lowland and lawn
Spring-stricken, or ever mine eyes had
beheld thee made dark in thy
dawn.

Chorus. When thou dravest the men
Of the chosen of Thrace,
None turned him again
Nor endured he thy face
Clothed round with the blush of the
battle, with light from a terrible
place.

Ceneus. Thou shouldst die as he dies
For whom none sheddeth tears;
Filling thine eyes
And fulfilling thine ears,
With the brilliance of battle, the bloom
and the beauty, the splendor of
spears.

Chorus. In the ears of the world
It is sung, it is told,
And the light thereof hurled
And the noise thereof rolled
From the Acroceraunian snow to the
ford of the fleece of gold.

Meleager. Would God ye could carry me
Forth of all these;
Heap sand and bury me
By the Chersonese,
Where the thundering Bosphorus an-
swers the thunder of Pontic seas.

Ceneus. Dost thou mock at our praise
And the singing begun

And the men of strange days
Praising my son
In the folds of the hills of home, high
places of Calydon?

Meleager. For the dead man no home is;
Ah, better to be
What the flower of the foam is
In fields of the sea,
That the sea-waves might be as my rai-
ment, the gulf-stream a garment
for me.

Chorus. Who shall seek thee and bring
And restore thee thy day,
When the dove dipped her wing,
And the oars won their way
Where the narrowing Symplegades
whitened the straits of Propontis
with spray?

Meleager. Will ye crown me my tomb
Or exalt me my name,
Now my spirits consume,
Now my flesh is a flame?
Let the sea slake it once, and men speak
of me sleeping to praise me or
shame.

Chorus. Turn back now, turn thee,
As who turns him to wake;
Though the life in thee burn thee,
Couldst thou bathe it and slake
Where the sea-ridge of Helle hangs
heavier, and east upon west waters
break?

Meleager. Would the winds blow me
back
Or the waves hurl me home?
Ah, to touch in the track
Where the pine learnt to roam
Cold girdles and crowns of the sea-gods,
cool blossoms of water and foam!

Chorus. The gods may release
That they made fast;
Thy soul shall have ease
In thy limbs at the last;
But what shall they give thee for life,
sweet life that is overpast?

Meleager. Not the life of men's veins,
Not of flesh that conceives;
But the grace that remains,
The fair beauty that cleaves
To the life of the rains in the grasses, the
life of the dews on the leaves.

Chorus. Thou wert helmsman and chief;
Wilt thou turn in an hour,
Thy limbs to the leaf,
Thy face to the flower,
Thy blood to the water, thy soul to the
gods who divide and devour?

Meleager. The years are hungry,
They wait all their days;
The gods wax angry
And weary of praise;
And who shall bridle their lips? and
who shall straighten their ways?

Chorus. The gods guard over us
With sword and with rod;
Weaving shadow to cover us,
Heaping the sod,
That law may fulfil herself wholly, to
darken man's face before God.

FINAL CHORUS

Who shall contend with his lords
Or cross them or do them wrong?
Who shall bind them as with cords?
Who shall tame them as with song?
Who shall smite them as with swords?
For the hands of their kingdom are
strong. 1865.

SONGS FROM CHASTELARD

MARY BEATON'S SONG¹

Le navire
Est à l'eau;
Entends rire
Ce gros flot
Que fait luire
Et bruire
Le vieux sire
Aquila.

Dans l'espace
Du grand air
Le vent passe
Comme un fer;
Siffle et sonne,
Tombe et tonne;
Prend et donne
À la mer.

¹ Probably no excuse is needed for including here some examples of Swinburne's French verse, both for its own light and exquisite beauty, and because it so characteristically represents him. One of his chief distinctions is that of being perhaps the only Englishman who ever really understood and appreciated French poetry.

Vois, la brise
Tourne au nord,
Et la bise
Souffle et mord
Sur ta pure
Chevelure
Qui murmure
Et se tord.

Le navire
Passe et luit,
Puis chavire
À grand bruit ;
Et sur l'onde
La plus blonde
Tête au monde
Flotte et fuit.

Moi, je rame,
Et l'amour,
C'est ma flamme,
Mon grand jour,
Ma chandelle
Blanche et belle,
Ma chapelle
De séjour.

Toi, mon âme
Et ma foi,
Sois ma dame
Et ma loi ;
Sois ma mie,
Sois Marie,
Sois ma vie,
Toute à moi !

LOVE AT EBB

Between the sunset and the sea
My love laid hands and lips on me ;
Of sweet came sour, of day came night,
Of long desire came brief delight :
Ah love, and what thing came of thee
Between the sea-downs and the sea ?

Between the sea-mark and the sea
Joy grew to grief, grief grew to me ;
Love turned to tears, and tears to fire,
And dead delight to new desire ;
Love's talk, love's touch there seemed to
be
Between the sea-sand and the sea.

Between the sundown and the sea
Love watched one hour of love with me ;
Then down the all-golden water-ways
His feet flew after yesterday's ;
I saw them come and saw them flee
Between the sea-foam and the sea.

Between the sea-strand and the sea
Love fell on sleep, sleep fell on me ;
The first star saw twain turn to one
Between the moonrise and the sun ;
The next, that saw not love, saw me
Between the sea-banks and the sea.

THE QUEEN'S SONG

J'ai vu faner bien des choses,
Mainte feuille aller au vent.
En songeant aux vieilles roses,
J'ai pleuré souvent.

Vois tu dans les roses mortes
Amour qui sourit caché ?
O mon amant, à nos portes
L'as-tu vu couché ?

As-tu vu jamais au monde
Vénus chasser et courir ?
Fille de l'onde, avec l'onde
Doit-elle mourir ?

Aux jours de neige et de givre
L'amour s'effeuille et s'endort ;
Avec mai doit-il revivre,
Ou bien est-il mort ?

Qui sait où s'en vont les roses ?
Qui sait où s'en va le vent ?
En songeant à telles choses,
J'ai pleuré souvent.

1865.

HYMN TO PROSERPINE

(AFTER THE PROCLAMATION IN ROME OF
THE CHRISTIAN FAITH)

Vicisti, Galilæe

I HAVE lived long enough, having seen
one thing, that love hath an end ;
Goddess and maiden and queen, be near
me now and befriend.
Thou art more than the day or the mor-
row, the seasons that laugh or that
weep ;
For these give joy and sorrow ; but thou,
Proserpina, sleep.
Sweet is the treading of wine, and sweet
the feet of the dove ;
But a goodlier gift is thine than foam
of the grapes or love.
Yea, is not even Apollo, with hair and
harpstring of gold,
A bitter God to follow, a beautiful God
to behold ?
I am sick of singing ; the bays burn deep
and chafe : I am fain

To rest a little from praise and grievous
pleasure and pain.
For the Gods we know not of, who give
us our daily breath,
We know they are cruel as love or life,
and lovely as death.
O Gods dethroned and deceased, cast
forth, wiped out in a day!
From your wrath is the world released,
redeemed from your chains, men
say.
New Gods are crowned in the city, their
flowers have broken your rods;
They are merciful, clothed with pity,
the young compassionate Gods.
But for me their new device is barren,
the days are bare;
Things long past over suffice, and men
forgotten that were.
Time and the Gods are at strife: ye
dwell in the midst thereof,
Draining a little life from the barren
breasts of love.
I say to you, cease, take rest; yea, I say
to you all, be at peace,
Till the bitter milk of her breast and the
barren bosom shall cease.
Wilt thou yet take all, Galilean? but
these thou shalt not take.
The laurel, the palms and the pæan,
the breast of the nymphs in the
brake;
Breasts more soft than a dove's, that
tremble with tenderer breath;
And all the wings of the Loves, and all
the joy before death;
All the feet of the hours that sound as
a single lyre,
Dropped and deep in the flowers, with
strings that flicker like fire.
More than these wilt thou give, things
fairer than all these things?
Nay, for a little we live, and life hath
mutable wings.
A little while and we die; shall life not
thrive as it may?
For no man under the sky lives twice,
outliving his day.
And grief is a grievous thing, and a man
hath enough of his tears;
Why should he labor, and bring fresh
grief to blacken his years?
Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean;
the world has grown gray from
thy breath:
We have drunken of things Lethean,
and fed on the fulness of death.
Laurel is green for a season, and love is
sweet for a day;

But love grows bitter with treason, and
laurel outlives not May.
Sleep, shall we sleep after all? for the
world is not sweet in the end;
For the old faiths loosen and fall, the
new years ruin and rend.
Fate is a sea without shore, and the soul
is a rock that abides;
But her ears are vexed with the roar and
her face with the foam of the tides.
O lips that the live blood faints in, the
leavings of racks and rods!
O ghastly glories of saints, dead limbs of
gibbeted Gods!
Though all men abase them before you
in spirit, and all knees bend,
I kneel not, neither adore you, but
standing, look to the end.
All delicate days and pleasant, all spirits
and sorrows are cast
Far out with the foam of the present that
sweeps to the surf of the past:
Where beyond the extreme sea-wall, and
between the remote sea-gates,
Waste water washes, and tall ships
founder, and deep death waits:
Where, mighty with deepening sides,
clad about with the seas as with
wings,
And impelled of invisible tides, and ful-
filled of unspeakable things,
White-eyed and poisonous-finned, shark-
toothed and serpentine-curved,
Rolls, under the whitening wind of the
future, the wave of the world.
The depths stand naked in sunder behind
it, the storms flee away;
In the hollow before it the thunder is
taken and snared as a prey;
In its sides is the north-wind bound; and
its salt is of all men's tears;
With light of ruin, and sound of changes,
and pulse of years:
With travail of day after day, and with
trouble of hour upon hour;
And bitter as blood is the spray; and the
crests are as fangs that devour:
And its vapor and storm of its steam as
the sighing of spirits to be;
And its noise as the noise in a dream;
and its depth as the roots of the sea:
And the height of its heads as the height
of the utmost stars of the air:
And the ends of the earth at the might
thereof tremble, and time is made
bare.
Will ye bridle the deep sea with reins,
will ye chaster the high sea with
rods?

Will ye take her to chain her with chains,
who is older than all ye Gods?

All ye as a wind shall go by, as a fire
shall ye pass and be past;

Ye are Gods, and behold ye shall die, and
the waves be upon you at last.

In the darkness of time, in the deeps of
the years, in the changes of things,

Ye shall sleep as a slain man sleeps, and
the world shall forget you for
kings.

Though the feet of thine high priests
tread where thy lords and our
forefathers trod,

Though these that were Gods are dead,
and thou being dead art a God,

Though before thee the throned Cytherean
be fallen, and hidden her
head,

Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean, thy
dead shall go down to thee dead.

Of the maiden thy mother, men sing as a
goddess with grace clad around;

Thou art throned where another was
king; where another was queen
she is crowned.

Yea, once we had sight of another: but
now she is queen, say these.

Not as thine, not as thine was our mother,
a blossom of flowering seas,

Clothed round with the world's desire as
with raiment, and fair as the foam,
And fleetier than kindled fire, and a goddess
and mother of Rome.

For thine came pale and a maiden, and
sister to sorrow; but ours,

Her deep hair heavily laden with odor
and color of flowers,

White rose of the rose-white water, a
silver splendor, a flame,

Bent down unto us that besought her,
and earth grew sweet with her
name.

For thine came weeping, a slave among
slaves, and rejected; but she

Came flushed from the full-flushed wave,
and imperial, her foot on the sea,

And the wonderful waters knew her, the
winds and the viewless ways,

And the roses grew rosier, and bluer the
sea-blue stream of the bays.

Ye are fallen, our lords by what token?
we wist that ye should not fall.

Ye were all so fair that are broken; and
one more fair than ye all.

But I turn to her still, having seen she
shall surely abide in the end;

Goddess and maiden and queen, be near
me now and befriend.

O daughter of earth, of my mother, hea
crown and blossom of birth,

I am also, I also, thy brother; I go as I
came unto earth.

In the night where thine eyes are as
moons are in heaven, the night
where thou art,

Where the silence is more than all tunes,
where sleep overflows from the
heart,

Where the poppies are sweet as the rose
in our world, and the red rose is
white,

And the wind falls faint as it blows with
the fume of the flowers of the
night,

And the murmur of spirits that sleep in
the shadow of Gods from afar

Grows dim in thine ears and deep as the
deep dim soul of a star,

In the sweet low light of thy face, un-
der heavens untrod by the sun,

Let my soul with their souls find place,
and forget what is done and un-
done.

Thou art more than the Gods who
number the days of our temporal
breath;

For these give labor and slumber; but
thou, Proserpina, death.

Therefore now at thy feet I abide for a
season in silence. I know

I shall die as my fathers died, and sleep
as they sleep; even so.

For the glass of the year is brittle
wherein we gaze for a span;

A little soul for a little bears up this
corpse which is man.¹

So long I endure, no longer; and laugh
not again, neither weep.

For there is no God found stronger than
death; and death is a sleep. 1866.

A MATCH

If love were what the rose is,

And I were like the leaf,

Our lives would grow together

In sad or singing weather,

Blown fields or flowerful closes,

Green pleasure or gray grief;

If love were what the rose is,

And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,

And love were like the tune,

With double sound and single

Delight our lips would mingle,

¹ ψυχάριον εἰ βαστάζον νεκρόν. ΕΡΙCTETUS

With kisses glad as birds are
That get sweet rain at noon;
If I were what the words are
And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather
With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath;
If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy;
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying-feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
And find his mouth a rein;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain. 1866.

A BALLAD OF BURDENS

THE burden of fair women. Vain delight,
And love self-slain in some sweet
shameful way,
And sorrowful old age that comes by
night
As a thief comes that has no heart by
day,
And change that finds fair cheeks and
leaves them gray,
And weariness that keeps awake for hire,
And grief that says what pleasure used
to say;
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bought kisses. This is
sore,

A burden without fruit in child-
bearing;
Between the nightfall and the dawn
threescore,
Threescore between the dawn and
evening.
The shuddering in thy lips, the shud-
dering
In thy sad eyelids tremulous like fire,
Makes love seem shameful and a
wretched thing.
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sweet speeches. Nay,
kneel down,
Cover thy head, and weep; for verily
These market-men that buy thy white
and brown
In the last days shall take no thought
for thee.
In the last days like earth thy face
shall be,
Yea, like sea-marsh made thick with
brine and mire,
Sad with sick leavings of the sterile
sea.
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of long living. Thou shalt
fear
Waking, and sleeping mourn upon thy
bed;
And say at night, "Would God the day
were here,"
And say at dawn "Would God the day
were dead."
With weary days thou shalt be clothed
and fed,
And wear-remorse of heart for thine
attire,
Pain for thy girdle and sorrow upon
thine head:
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of bright colors. Thou shalt
see
Gold tarnished, and the gray above the
green;
And as the thing thou seest thy face
shall be,
And no more as the thing beforetime
seen.
And thou shalt say of mercy "It hath
been,"
And living, watch the old lips and loves
expire,
And talking, tears shall take thy
breath between.
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of sad sayings. In that day
Thou shalt tell all thy days and hours,
and tell

Thy times and ways and words of love,
and say

How one was dear and one desirable,
And sweet was life to hear and sweet
to smell,

But now with lights reverse the old hours
retire

And the last hour is shod with fire from
hell.

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of four seasons. Rain in
spring,

White rain and wind among the tender
trees ;

A summer of green sorrows gathering,
Rank autumn in a mist of miseries,

With sad face set towards the year,
that sees

The charred ash drop out of the dropping
pyre,

And winter wan with many maladies ;
This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of dead faces. Out of sight
And out of love, beyond the reach of
hands,

Changed in the changing of the dark and
light,

They walk and weep about the barren
lands

Where no seed is nor any garner stands,
Where in short breaths the doubtful days

respire,
And time's turned glass lets through
the sighing sands ;

This is the end of every man's desire.

The burden of much gladness. Life and
lust [light ;

Forsake thee, and the face of thy de-
And underfoot the heavy hour strews
dust ;

And overhead strange weathers burn
and bite ;

And where the red was, lo, the blood-
less white,

And where truth was, the likeness of a
liar,

And where day was, the likeness of
the night ;

This is the end of every man's desire.

ENVOI

Princes, and ye whom pleasure quick-
eneth,

Heed well this rhyme before your
pleasure tire ;

For life is sweet, but after life is death.

This is the end of every man's desire.
1866.

RONDEL

KISSING her hair I sat against her feet,
Wove and unwove it, wound and found
it sweet

Made fast therewith her hands, drew
down her eyes,

Deep as deep flowers and dreamy like
dim skies ;

With her own tresses bound and found
her fair,

Kissing her hair.

Sleep were no sweeter than her face to
me.

Sleep of cold sea-bloom under the cold
sea ;

What pain could get between my face
and hers ?

What new sweet thing would love not
relish worse ?

Unless, perhaps, white death had kissed
me there,

Kissing her hair ? 1866.

IN MEMORY OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

BACK to the flower-town, side by side,
The bright months bring,

New-born, the bridegroom and the bride,
Freedom and spring.

The sweet land laughs from sea to sea,
Filled full of sun ;

All things come back to her, being
free,—

All things but one.

In many a tender wheaten plot
Flowers that were dead

Live, and old suns revive ; but not
That holier head.

By this white wandering waste of sea,
Far north, I hear

One face shall never turn to me
As once this year ;

Shall never smile and turn and rest
On mine as there,

Nor one most sacred hand be pressed
Upon my hair.

I came as one whose thoughts half linger,
Half run before ;
The youngest to the oldest singer
That England bore.

I found him whom I shall not find
Till all grief end,
In holiest age our mightiest mind,
Father and friend.

But thou, if anything endure,
If hope there be,
O spirit that man's life left pure,
Man's death set free,

Not with disdain of days that were
Look earthward now :
Let dreams revive the reverend hair,
The imperial brow ;

Come back in sleep, for in the life
Where thou art not
We find none like thee. Time and
strife
And the world's lot

Move thee no more ; but love at least,
And reverent heart,
May move thee, royal and released
Soul, as thou art.

And thou, his Florence, to thy trust
Receive and keep,
Keep safe his dedicated dust,
His sacred sleep.

So shall thy lovers, come from far,
Mix with thy name
As morning-star with evening-star
His faultless fame. 1866.

THE GARDEN OF PROSERPINE

HERE, where the world is quiet,
Here, where all trouble seems
Dead winds' and spent waves' riot
In doubtful dreams of dreams ;
I watch the green field growing
For reaping folk and sowing,
For harvest time and mowing,
A sleepy world of streams.

I am tired of tears and laughter,
And men that laugh and weep
Of what may come hereafter
For men that sow to reap :
I am weary of days and hours,
Blown buds of barren flowers,
Desires and dreams and powers
And everything but sleep.

Here life has death for neighbor,
And far from eye or ear
Wan waves and wet winds labor,
Weak ships and spirits steer ;
They drive adrift, and whither
They wot not who make thither ;
But no such winds blow hither,
And no such things grow here

No growth of moor or coppice,
No heather-flower or vine,
But bloomless buds of poppies,
Green grapes of Proserpine,
Pale beds of blowing rushes
Where no leaf blooms or blushes,
Save this whereout she crushes
For dead men deadly wine.

Pale, without name or number,
In fruitless fields of corn,
They bow themselves and slumber
All night till light is born ;
And like a soul belated,
In hell and heaven unmated,
By cloud and mist abated
Comes out of darkness morn.

Though one were strong as seven,
He too with death shall dwell,
Nor wake with wings in heaven,
Nor weep for pains in hell ;
Though one were fair as roses,
His beauty clouds and closes ;
And well though love reposes,
In the end it is not well.

Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she
stands

Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands ;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born ;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn ;
And spring and seed and swallow
Take wing for her and follow
Where summer song rings hollow
And flowers are put to scorn.

There go the loves that wither,
The old loves with wearier wings ;
And all dead years draw thither,
And all disastrous things ;
Dead dreams of days forsaken

Blind buds that snows have shaken,
Wild leaves that winds have taken,
Red strays of ruined springs.

We are not sure of sorrow,
And joy was never sure;
To-day will die to-morrow
Time stoops to no man's lure;
And love, grown faint and fretful
With lips but half regretful
Sighs, and with eyes forgetful
Weeps that no loves endure.

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives for ever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea.

Then star nor sun shall waken,
Nor any change of light:
Nor sound of waters shaken,
Nor any sound or sight:
Nor wintry leaves nor vernal,
Nor days nor things diurnal;
Only the sleep eternal
In an eternal night. 1866.

LOVE AT SEA

We are in love's land to-day;
Where shall we go?
Love, shall we start or stay,
Or sail or row?
There's many a wind and way,
And never a May but May;
We are in love's hand to-day;
Where shall we go?

Our landwind is the breath
Of sorrows kissed to death
And joys that were:
Our ballast is a rose;
Our way lies where God knows
And love knows where.
We are in love's hand to-day—

Our seamen are fledged Loves,
Our masts are bills of doves,
Our decks fine gold;
Our ropes are dead maids' hair,
Our stores are love-shafts fair
And manifold.
We are in love's land to-day—

Where shall we land you, sweet?
On fields of strange men's feet,

Or fields near home?
Or where the fire-flowers blow,
Or where the flowers of snow
Or flowers of foam?
We are in love's hand to-day—

Land me, she says, where love
Shows but one shaft, one dove,
One heart, one hand.
—A shore like that, my dear,
Lies where no man will steer,
No maiden land.
Imitated from Théophile Gautier.
1866.

SAPPHICS

ALL the night sleep came not upon my
eyelids,
Shed not dew, nor shook nor unclosed a
feather,
Yet with lips shut close and with eyes of
iron
Stood and beheld me.

Then to me so lying awake a vision
Came without sleep over the seas and
touched me,
Softly touched mine eyelids and lips;
and I too,
Full of the vision,

Saw the white implacable Aphrodite,
Saw the hair unbound, and the feet un-
sandalled
Shine as fire of sunset on western waters;
Saw the reluctant

Feet, the straining plumes of the doves
that drew her,
Looking always, looking with necks re-
verted,
Back to Lesbos, back to the hills where-
under
Shone Mitylene;

Heard the flying feet of the Loves be-
hind her
Make a sudden thunder upon the waters,
As the thunder flung from the strong
unclosing
Wings of a great wind.

So the goddess fled from her place, with
awful
Sound of feet and thunder of wings
around her;
While behind a clamor of singing women
Severed the twilight.

Ah the singing, ah the delight, the passion !
 All the Loves wept, listening ; sick with anguish,
 Stood the crowned nine Muses about Apollo ;

Fear was upon them,

While the tenth sang wonderful things they knew not.

Ah, the tenth, the Lesbian ! the nine were silent,

None endured the sound of her song for weeping ;

Laurel by laurel,

Faded all their crowns ; but about her forehead,

Round her woven tresses and ashen temples

White as dead snow, paler than grass in summer,

Ravaged with kisses,

Shone a light of fire as a crown for ever.

Yea, almost the implacable Aphrodite Paused, and almost wept ; such a song was that song ;

Yea, by her name too

Called her, saying, "Turn to me, O my Sappho ;"

Yet she turned her face from the Loves, she saw not

Tears or laughter darken immortal eyelids,

Heard not about her

Fearful fitful wings of the doves departing,

Saw not how the bosom of Aphrodite Shook with weeping, saw not her shaken raiment,

Saw not her hands wrung ;

Saw the Lesbians kissing across their smitten

Lutes with lips more sweet than the sound of lute-strings,

Mouth to mouth and hand upon hand, her chosen,

Fairer than all men ;

Only saw the beautiful lips and fingers, Full of songs and kisses and little whis-

pers.

Full of music ; only beheld among them Soar, as a bird soars

Newly fledged, her visible song, a marvel,

Made of perfect sound and exceeding passion,

Sweetly shapen, terrible, full of thunders,

Clothed with the wind's wings.

Then rejoiced she, laughing with love, and scattered

Roses, awful roses of holy blossom ;

Then the Loves thronged sadly with hidden faces

Round Aphrodite,

Then the Muses, stricken at heart, were silent ;

Yea, the gods waxed pale ; such a song was that song.

All reluctant, all with a fresh repulsion, Flew from before her.

All withdrew long since, and the land was barren,

Full of fruitless women and music only.

Now perchance, when winds are assuaged at sunset,

Lulled at the dewfall,

By the gray sea-side, unassuaged, unheard of,

Unbeloved, unseen in the ebb of twilight,

Ghosts of outcast women return lamenting,

Purged not in Lethe,

Clothed about with flame and with tears, and singing

Songs that move the heart of the shaken heaven,

Songs that break the heart of the earth with pity,

Hearing, to hear them. 1866.

DEDICATION

[POEMS AND BALLADS, FIRST SERIES]

THE sea gives her shells to the shingle,
 The earth gives her streams to the sea ;

There are many, but my gift is single,
 My verses, the first-fruits of me.

Let the wind take the green and the gray leaf

Cast forth without fruit upon air ;

Take rose-leaf and vine-leaf and bay-leaf

Blown loose from the hair.

The night shakes them round me in
legions,

Dawn drives them before her like
dreams ;

Time sheds them like snows on strange
regions,

Swept shoreward on infinite streams ;
Leaves pallid and sombre and ruddy,

Dead fruits of the fugitive years ;
Some stained as with wine and made
bloody,

And some as with tears.

Some scattered in seven years' traces,
As they fell from the boy that was
then ;

Long left among idle green places,
Or gathered but now among men ;

On seas full of wonder and peril,
Blown white round the capes of the
north ;

Or in islands where myrtles are sterile
And loves bring not forth.

O daughters of dreams and of stories

That life is not wearied of yet,

Faustine, Fragoletta, Dolores,

Félice and Yolande and Juliette,

Shall I find you not still, shall I miss
you,

When sleep, that is true or that seems,
Comes back to me hopeless to kiss you,
O daughters of dreams ?

They are past as a slumber that passes,

As the dew of a dawn of old time ;

More frail than the shadows on glasses,

More fleet than a wave or a rhyme.

As the waves after ebb drawing sea-
ward,

When their hollows are full of the
night,

So the birds that flew singing to me-
ward

Recede out of sight.

The songs of dead seasons, that wander
On wings of articulate words ;

Lost leaves that the shore-wind may
squander,

Light flocks of untameable birds ;

Some sang to me dreaming in class time

And truant in hand as in tongue ;

For the youngest were born of boy's pas-
time,

The eldest are young.

Is there shelter while life in them
lingers,

Is there hearing for songs that recede,

Tunes touched from a harp with men's
fingers,

Or blown with boy's mouth in a reed ?

Is there place in the land of your labor,
Is there room in your world of de-
light,

Where change has not sorrow for neigh-
bor

And day has not night ?

In their wings though the sea-wind
yet quivers,

Will you spare not a space for them
there

Made green with the running of rivers

And gracious with temperate air ;

In the fields and the turreted cities

That cover from sunshine and rain

Fair passions and bountiful pities

And loves without stain ?

In a land of clear colors and stories,

In a region of shadowless hours,

Where earth has a garment of glories

And a murmur of musical flowers ;

In woods where the spring half un-
covers

The flush of her amorous face,

By the waters that listen for lovers,

For these is there place ?

For the song-birds of sorrow, that
muffle

Their music as clouds do their fire :

For the storm-birds of passion, that
ruffle

Wild wings in a wind of desire ;

In the stream of the storm as it settles

Blown seaward, borne far from the
sun,

Shaken loose on the darkness like petals

Dropped one after one ?

Though the world of your hands be more
gracious

And lovelier in lordship of things

Clothed round by sweet art with the
spacious

Warm heaven of her imminent wings,

Let them enter, unfledged and nigh
fainting,

For the love of old loves and lost
times ;

And receive in your palace of painting

This revel of rhymes.

Though the seasons of man full of losses

Make empty the years full of youth,

If but one thing be constant in crosses,

Change lays not her hand upon truth ;

Hopes die, and their tombs are for token
That the grief as the joy of them ends
Ere time that breaks all men has broken
The faith between friends.

Though the many lights dwindle to one
light,

There is help if the heaven has one ;
Though the skies be disrowned of the
sunlight

And the earth dispossessed of the sun,
They have moonlight and sleep for re-
payment.

When, refreshed as a bride and set
free,

With stars and sea-winds in her raiment,
Night sinks on the sea. 1866.

AN APPEAL

ART thou indeed among these,
Thou of the tyrannous crew,
The kingdoms fed upon blood,
O queen from of old of the seas,
England, art thou of them too
That drink of the poisonous flood,
That hide under poisonous trees?

Nay, thy name from of old,
Mother, was pure, or we dreamed ;
Purer we held thee than this,
Purer fain would we hold ;
So goodly a glory it seemed,
A fame so bounteous of bliss,
So more precious than gold.

A praise so sweet in our ears,
That thou in the tempest of things
As a rock for a refuge shouldst stand,
In the blood-red river of tears
Poured forth for the triumph of kings ;
A safeguard, a sheltering land,
In the thunder and torrent of years.

Strangers came gladly to thee,
Exiles, chosen of men,
Safe for thy sake in thy shade,
Sat down at thy feet and were free.
So men spake of thee then ;
Now shall their speaking be stayed ?
Ah, so let it not be !

Not for revenge or affright,
Pride, or a tyrannous lust,
Cast from thee the crown of thy praise.
Mercy was thine in thy might ;
Strong when thou wert, thou wert just ;
Now, in the wrong-doing days,
Cleave thou, thou at least, to the right.

How should one charge thee, how
sway,
Save by the memories that were ?
Not thy gold nor the strength of thy
ships,
Nor the might of thine armies at bay,
Made thee, mother, most fair ;
But a word from republican lips
Said in thy name in thy day.

Hast thou said it, and hast thou forgot ?
Is thy praise in thine ears as a scoff ?
Blood of men guiltless was shed,
Children, and souls without spot,
Shed, but in places far off ;
Let slaughter no more be, said
Milton ; and slaughter was not.

Was it not said of thee too,
Now, but now, by thy foes,
By the slaves that had slain their France
And thee would slay as they slew—
“ Down with her walls that enclose
Freemen that eye us askance,
Fugitives, men that are true ! ”

This was thy praise or thy blame
From bondsman or freeman—to be
Pure from pollution of slaves,
Clean of their sins, and thy name
Bloodless, innocent, free ;
Now if thou be not, thy waves
Wash not from off thee thy shame.

Freeman he is not, but slave,
Whoso in fear for the State
Cries for surety of blood,
Help of gibbet and grave ;
Neither is any land great
Whom, in her fear-stricken mood,
These things only can save.

Lo ! how fair from afar.
Taintless of tyranny, stands
Thy mighty daughter, for years
Who trod the winepress of war,—
Shines with immaculate hands ;
Slays not a foe, neither fears ;
Stains not peace with a scar.

Be not as tyrant or slave,
England ; be not as these,
Thou that wert other than they.
Stretch out thine hand, but to save ;
Put forth thy strength, and release :
Lest there arise, if thou slay.
Thy shame as a ghost from the grave.
November, 1867.

HERTHA

I AM that which began ;
 Out of me the years roll ;
 Out of me God and man ;
 I am equal and Whole ;
 God changes, and man, and the form of
 them bodily ; I am the soul.

Before ever land was,
 Before ever the sea,
 Or soft hair of the grass,
 Or fair limbs of the tree,
 Or the flesh-colored fruit of my branches,
 I was, and thy soul was in me.

First life on my sources
 First drifted and swam ;
 Out of me are the forces
 That save it or damn ;
 Out of me man and woman, and wild-
 beast and bird ; before God was, I
 am.

Beside or above me
 Nought is there to go ;
 Love or unlove me,
 Unknow me or know,
 I am that which unloves me and loves ;
 I am stricken, and I am the blow.

I the mark that is missed
 And the arrows that miss,
 I the mouth that is kissed
 And the breath in the kiss,
 The search, and the sought, and the
 seeker, the soul and the body that is.

I am that thing which blesses
 My spirit elate ;
 That which caresses
 With hands uncreate
 My limbs unbegotten that measure the
 length of the measure of fate.

But what thing dost thou now,
 Looking Godward, to cry
 " I am I, thou art thou,
 I am low, thou art high ? "
 I am thou, whom thou seekest to find
 him ; find thou but thyself, thou
 art I.

I the grain and the furrow,
 The plough-cloven clod
 And the ploughshare drawn
 thorough,
 The germ and the sod,
 The deed and the doer, the seed and the
 sower, the dust which is God.

Hast thou known how I fashioned
 thee,
 Child, underground ?
 Fire that impassioned thee,
 Iron that bound,
 Dim changes of water, what thing of all
 these hast thou known of or found ?

Canst thou say in thine heart
 Thou hast seen with thine eyes
 With what cunning of art
 Thou wast wrought in what
 wise,
 By what force of what stuff thou wast
 shapen, and shown on my breast to
 the skies ?

Who hath given, who hath sold it
 thee,
 Knowledge of me ?
 Hath the wilderness told it thee ?
 Hast thou learnt of the sea ?
 Hast thou communed in spirit with
 night ? have the winds taken coun-
 sel with thee ?

Have I set such a star
 To show light on thy brow
 That thou sawest from afar
 What I show to thee now ?
 Have ye spoken as brethren together,
 the sun and the mountains and thou ?

What is here, dost thou know it ?
 What was, hast thou known ?
 Prophet nor poet
 Nor tripod nor throne
 Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer,
 but only thy mother alone.

Mother not maker,
 Born, and not made ;
 Though her children forsake her,
 Allured or afraid,
 Praying prayers to the God of their
 fashion, she stirs not for all that
 have prayed.

A creed is a rod,
 And a crown is of night ;
 But this thing is God,
 To be man with thy might,
 To grow straight in the strength of thy
 spirit, and live out thy life as the
 light.

I am in thee to save thee,
 As my soul in thee saith,
 Give thou as I gave thee,
 Thy life-blood and breath,

Green leaves of thy labor, white flowers
of thy thought, and red fruit of thy
death.

Be the ways of thy giving
As mine were to thee;
The free life of thy living,
Be the gift of it free;
Not as servant to lord, nor as master to
slave, shalt thou give thee to me.

O children of banishment,
Souls overcast,
Were the lights ye see vanish
meant
Always to last,
Ye would know not the sun overshadowing
the shadows and stars overpast.

I that saw where ye trod
The dim paths of the night
Set the shadow called God
In your skies to give light;
But the morning of manhood is risen, and
the shadowless soul is in sight.

The tree many-rooted
That swells to the sky
With frondage red-fruited,
The life-tree am I;
In the buds of your lives is the sap of my
leaves: ye shall live and not die.

But the Gods of your fashion
That take and that give,
In their pity and passion
That scourge and forgive,
They are worms that are bred in the
bark that falls off: they shall die
and not live.

My own blood is what stanches
The wounds in my bark:
Stars caught in my branches
Make day of the dark,
And are worshipped as suns till the sun-
rise shall tread out their fires as a
spark.

Where dead ages hide under
The live roots of the tree,
In my darkness the thunder
Makes utterance of me;
In the clash of my boughs with each
other ye hear the waves sound of
the sea.

That noise is of Time,
As his feathers are spread
And his feet set to climb

Through the boughs overhead,
And my foliage rings round him and
rustles, and branches are bent with
his tread.

The storm-winds of ages
Blow through me and cease,
The war-wind that rages,
The spring-wind of peace,
Ere the breath of them roughen my
tresses, ere one of my blossoms in-
crease.

All sounds of all changes,
All shadows and lights
On the world's mountain-ranges
And stream-riven heights,
Whose tongue is the wind's tongue and
language of storm-clouds on earth-
shaking nights;

All forms of all faces,
All works of all hands
In unsearchable places
Of time-stricken lands,
All death and all life, and all reigns and
all ruins, drop through me as sands.

Though sore be my burden
And more than ye know,
And my growth have no guerdon
But only to grow,
Yet I fail not of growing for lightnings
above me or death worms below.

These too have their part in me,
As I too in these;
Such fire is at heart in me,
Such sap is this tree's,
Which hath in it all sounds and all
secrets of infinite lands and of seas.

In the spring-colored hours
When my mind was as May's,
There brake forth of me flowers
By centuries of days,
Strong blossoms with perfume of man-
hood, shot out from my spirit as rays.

And the sound of them springing
And smell of their shoots
Were as warmth and sweet singing
And strength to my roots;
And the lives of my children made per-
fect with freedom of soul were my
fruits.

I bid you but be;
I have need not of prayer;
I have need of you free

As your mouths of mine air ;
That my heart may be greater within
me, beholding the fruits of me fair.

More fair than strange fruit is
Of faith ye espouse ;
In me only the root is
That blooms in your boughs ;
Behold now your God that ye made you,
to feed him with faith of your vows.

In the darkening and whitening
Abysses ador'd,
With dayspring and lightning
For lamp and for sword,
God thunders in heaven, and his angels
are red with the wrath of the Lord.

O my sons, O too dutiful
Toward Gods not of me,
Was not I enough beautiful ?
Was it hard to be free ?
For behold, I am with you, am in you
and of you ; look forth now and see.

Lo, wing'd with world's wonders,
With miracles shod,
With the fires of his thunders
For raiment and rod,
God trembles in heaven, and his angels
are white with the terror of God.

For his twilight is come on him,
His anguish is here ;
And his spirits gaze dumb on him,
Grown gray from his fear ;
And his hour taketh hold on him
stricken, the last of his infinite year.

Thought made him and breaks
him,
Truth slays and forgives ;
But to you, as time takes him,
This new thing it gives,
Even love, the beloved Republic, that
feeds upon freedom and lives.

For truth only is living,
Truth only is whole,
And the love of his giving
Man's polestar and pole ;
Man, pulse of my centre, and fruit of
my body, and seed of my soul.

One birth of my bosom ;
One beam of mine eye ;
One topmost blossom
That scales the sky ;
Man, equal and one with me, man that
is made of me, man that is I. 1871.

THE PILGRIMS

"WHO is your lady of love, O ye that
pass
Singing ? and is it for sorrow of that
which was

That ye sing sadly, or dream of what
shall be ?

For gladly at once and sadly it seems
ye sing."

—"Our lady of love by you is unbe-
holden

For hands she hath none, nor eyes, nor
lips, nor golden

Treasure of hair, nor face nor form ;
But we

That love, we know her more fair
than any thing."

—"Is she a queen, having great gifts to
give ?"

—"Yea, these ; that whoso hath seen
her shall not live

Except he serve her sorrowing, with
strange pain,

Travail and bloodshedding and bit-
terer tears ;

And when she bids die he shall surely
die.

And he shall leave all things under the
sky,

And go forth naked under sun and
rain,

And work and wait and watch out
all his years."

—"Hath she on earth no place of habi-
tation ?"

—"Age to age calling, nation answer-
ing nation,

Cries out, Where is she ? and there is
none to say ;

For if she be not in the spirit of men,
For if in the inward soul she hath no
place,

In vain they cry unto her, seeking her
face,

In vain their mouths make much of
her ; for they

Cry with vain tongues, till the heart
lives again."

—"O ye that follow, and have ye no
repentance ?

For on your brows is written a mortal
sentence,

An hieroglyph of sorrow, a fiery sign,
That in your lives ye shall not pause
or rest,

Nor have the sure sweet common love,
nor keep
Friends and safe days, nor joy of life
nor sleep."

—"These have we not, who have one
thing, the divine
Face and clear eyes of faith and
fruitful breast."

—"And ye shall die before your thrones
be won."

—"Yea, and the changed world and the
liberal sun
Shall move and shine without us, and
we lie

Dead; but if she too move on earth,
and live,
But if the old world with all the old
irons rent

Laugh and give thanks, shall we be not
content?

Nay, we shall rather live, we shall not
die,
Life being so little, and death so
good to give."

—"And these men shall forget you."—
"Yea, but we

Shall be a part of the earth and the an-
cient sea,

And heaven-high air august, and aw-
ful fire,
And all things good; and no man's
heart shall beat

But somewhat in it of our blood once
shed

Shall quiver and quicken, as now in us
the dead

Blood of men slain and the old same
life's desire

Plants in their fiery footprints our
fresh feet."

—"But ye that might be clothed with
all things pleasant,

Ye are foolish that put off the fair soft
present,

That clothe yourselves with the cold
future air;

When mother and father and ten-
der sister and brother

And the old live love that was shall be
as ye,

Dust, and no fruit of loving life shall
be."

—"She shall be yet who is more than
all these were,

Than sister or wife or father unto us
or mother."

—"Is this worth life, is this, to win for
wages?

Lo, the dead mouths of the awful gray-
grown ages,

The venerable, in the past that is their
prison,

In the outer darkness, in the un-
opening grave,

Laugh, knowing how many as ye now
say have said,

How many, and all are fallen, are fallen
and dead:

Shall ye dead rise, and these dead have
not risen?"

—"Not we but she, who is tender,
and swift to save."

—"Are ye not weary and faint not by
the way,

Seeing night by night devoured of day
by day,

Seeing hour by hour consumed in sleep-
less fire?

Sleepless; and ye too, when shall ye
too sleep?"

—"We are weary in heart and head, in
hands and feet,

And surely more than all things sleep
were sweet,—

Than all things save the inexorable
desire

Which whoso knoweth shall neither
faint nor weep."

—"Is this so sweet that one were fain
to follow?

Is this so sure where all men's hopes are
hollow,

Even this your dream, that by much
tribulation

Ye shall make whole flawed hearts,
and bowed necks straight?"

—"Nay, though our life were blind, our
death were fruitless,

Not therefore were the whole world's
high hope rootless;

But man to man, nation would turn to
nation,

And the old life live, and the old
great word be great."

—"Pass on, then, and pass by us, and
let us be,

For what light think ye after life to
see?

And if the world fare better will ye
know?

And if man triumph who shall seek
you and say?"

—“Enough of light is this for one life’s span,
That all men born are mortal, but not man;
And we men bring death lives by night to sow,
That men may reap and eat and live by day.” 1871.

TO WALT WHITMAN IN AMERICA

SEND but a song oversea for us,
Heart of their hearts who are free,
Heart of their singer, to be for us
More than our singing can be;
Ours, in the tempest at error,
With no light but the twilight of terror;
Send us a song oversea!

Sweet-smelling of pine leaves and grasses,
And blown as a tree through and through
With the winds of the keen mountain-passes,
And tender as sun-smitten dew;
Sharp-tongued as the winter that shakes
The wastes of your limitless lakes,
Wide-eyed as the sea-line’s blue.

O strong-winged soul with prophetic
Lips hot with the bloodbeats of song,
With tremor of heartstrings magnetic,
With thoughts as thunders in throng,
With consonant ardors of chords
That pierce men’s souls as with swords
And hale them hearing along.

Make us, too, music, to be with us
As a word from a world’s heart warm,
To sail the dark as a sea with us,
Full-sailed, outsing the storm,
A song to put fire in our ears
Whose burning shall burn up tears,
Whose sign bid battle reform;

A note in the ranks of a clarion,
A word in the wind of cheer,
To consume as with lightning the carrion
That makes time foul for us here;
In the air that our dead things infest
A blast of the breath of the west,
Till east way as west way is clear.

Out of the sun beyond sunset,
From the evening whence morning shall be,
With the rollers in measureless onset,
With the van of the storming sea,

With the world-wide wind, with the breath
That breaks ships driven upon death,
With the passion of all things free,

With the sea-steeds footless and frantic,
White myriads for death to bestride
In the charge of the ruining Atlantic
Where deaths by regiments ride,
With clouds and clamors of waters,
With a long note shriller than slaughter’s
On the furrowless fields world-wide,

With terror, with ardor and wonder,
With the soul of the season that wakes
When the weight of a whole year’s thunder
In the tidestream of autumn breaks,
Let the flight of the wide-winged word
Come over, come in and be heard,
Take form and fire for our sakes.

For a continent bloodless with travail
Here toils and brawls as it can,
And the web of it who shall unravel
Of all that peer on the plan;
Would fain grow men, but they grow not,
And fain be free, but they know not
One name for freedom and man?

One name, not twain for division;
One thing, not twain, from the birth;
Spirit and substance and vision,
Worth more than worship is worth;
Unbeheld, unadored, undivined,
The cause, the centre, the mind,
The secret and sense of the earth.

Here as a weakling in irons,
Here as a weanling in bands
As a prey that the stake-net environs,
Our life that we looked for stands;
And the man-child naked and dear,
Democracy, turns on us here
Eyes trembling, with tremulous hands.

It sees not what season shall bring to it
Sweet fruit of its bitter desire;
Few voices it hears yet sing to it,
Few pulses of hearts reaspire:
Foresees not time, nor forehears
The noises of imminent years,
Earthquake, and thunder, and fire:

When crowned and weaponed and curbless
It shall walk without helm or shield
The bare burnt furrows and herbless

Of war's last flame-stricken field,
Till godlike, equal with time,
It stand in the sun sublime,
In the godhead of man revealed.

Round your people and over them
Light like raiment is drawn,
Close as a garment to cover them
Wrought not of mail nor of lawn :
Here, with hope hardly to wear,
Naked nations and bare
Swim, sink, strike out for the dawn.

Chains are here, and a prison,
Kings, and subjects, and shame :
If the God upon you be arisen,
How should our songs be the same ?
How in confusion of change,
How shall we sing, in a strange
Land songs praising his name ?

God is buried and dead to us,
Even the spirit of earth,
Freedom : so have they said to us,
Some with mocking and mirth,
Some with heartbreak and tears :
And a God without eyes, without ears,
Who shall sing of him, dead in the
birth ?

The earth-god Freedom, the lonely
Face lightening, the footprint unshod.
Not as one man crucified only
Nor scourged with but one life's rod :
The soul that is substance of nations,
Reincarnate with fresh generations ;
The great god Man, which is God.

But in weariest of years and obscurest
Doth it live not at heart of all things
The one God and one spirit, a purest
Life, fed from unstanachable springs ?
Within love, within hatred it is,
And its seed in the stripe as the kiss,
And in slaves is the germ, and in
kings.

Freedom we call it, for holier
Name of the soul's there is none ;
Surelier it labors, if slower,
Than the metres of star or of sun ;
Slower than life unto breath,
Surelier than time unto death,
It moves till its labor be done.

Till the motion be done and the measure
Circling through season and clime,
Slumber and sorrow and pleasure,
Vision of virtue and crime ;
Till consummate with conquering eyes,

A soul disembodied, it rise
From the body transfigured of time.

Till it rise and remain and take station
With the stars of the world that re-
joice ;

Till the voice of its heart's exultation
Be as theirs an invariable voice,
By no discord of evil estranged,
By no pause, by no breach in it changed,
By no clash in the chord of its choice.

It is one with the world's generations,
With the spirit, the star, and the sod :
With the kingless and king-stricken
nations,
With the cross, and the chain, and
the rod ;
The most high, the most secret, most
lonely,
The earth-soul Freedom, that only
Lives, and that only is God. 1871.

FROM MATER TRIUMPHALIS

[TO LIBERTY]

I am thine harp between thine hands,
O mother !
All my strong chords are strained
with love of thee.
We grapple in love and wrestle, as each
with other
Wrestle the wind and the reluctant
sea.

I am no courtier of thee sober-suited,
Who loves a little for a little pay.
Me not thy winds and storms, nor
thrones disrooted,
Nor molten crowns, nor thine own
sins, dismay.

Sinned hast thou sometime, therefore
art thou sinless ;
Stained hast thou been, who art there-
fore without stain ;
Even as man's soul is kin to thee, but
kinless
Thou, in whose womb Time sows the
all-various grain.

I do not bid thee spare me, O dreadful
mother !
I pray thee that thou spare not, of thy
grace.
How were it with me then, if ever
another
Should come to stand before thee in
this my place ?

I am the trumpet at thy lips, thy clarion,
 Full of thy cry, sonorous with thy
 breath;
 The graves of souls born worms, and
 creeds grown carrion
 Thy blast of judgment fills with fires
 of death.

Thou art the player whose organ-keys
 are thunders,
 And I, beneath thy foot, the pedal
 pressed;
 Thou art the ray whereat the rent night
 sunders,
 And I the cloudlet borne upon thy
 breast.

I shall burn up before thee, pass and
 perish,
 As haze in sunrise on the red sea-line;
 But thou from dawn to sunseting shalt
 cherish
 The thoughts that led and souls that
 lighted mine.

Reared between night and noon and
 truth and error,
 Each twilight-travelling bird that
 trills and screams
 Sickens at midday, nor can face for
 terror
 The imperious heaven's inevitable
 extremes.

I have no spirit of skill with equal
 fingers
 At sign to sharpen or to slacken
 strings;
 I keep no time of song with gold-perched
 singers
 And chirp of linnets on the wrists of
 kings.

I am thy storm-thrush of the days that
 darken,
 Thy petrel in the foam that bears thy
 bark
 To port through night and tempest: if
 thou hearken,
 My voice is in thy heaven before the
 lark.

My song is in the mist that hides thy
 morning,
 My cry is up before the day for thee;
 I have heard thee and beheld thee and
 give warning,
 Before thy wheels divide the sky and
 sea.

Birds shall wake with thee voiced and
 feathered fairer,
 To see in summer what I see in spring;
 I have eyes and heart to endure thee,
 O thunder-bearer,
 And they shall be who shall have
 tongues to sing.

I have love at least, and have not fear,
 and part not
 From thine unnavigable and wingless
 way;
 Thou tarriest, and I have not said thou
 art not,
 Nor all thy night long have denied thy
 day.

Darkness to daylight shall lift up thy
 paean,
 Hill to hill thunder, vale cry back to
 vale,
 With wind-notes as of eagles Æschy-
 lean,
 And Sappho singing in the nightin-
 gale.

Sung to by mighty sons of dawn and
 daughters,
 Of this night's songs thine ear shall
 keep but one,—
 That supreme song which shook the
 channelled waters,
 And called thee skyward as God calls
 the sun.

Come, though all heaven again be fire
 above thee;
 Though death before thee come to
 clear thy sky;
 Let us but see in his thy face who love
 thee;
 Yea, though thou slay us, arise, and
 let us die. 1871.

COR CORDIUM

[SHELLEY]

O HEART of hearts, the chalice of love's
 fire,
 Hid round with flowers and all the
 bounty of bloom;
 O wonderful and perfect heart, for whom
 The lyrist liberty made life a lyre;
 O heavenly heart, at whose most dear
 desire
 Dead love, living and singing, cleft his
 tomb,

And with him risen and regent in death's
room
All day thy choral pulses rang full choir;
O heart whose beating blood was run-
ning song,
O sole thing sweeter than thine own
songs were,
Help us for thy free love's sake to be
free,
True for thy truth's sake, for thy
strength's sake strong,
Till very liberty make clean and fair
The nursing earth as the sepulchral sea.
1871.

"NON DOLET."

It does not hurt. She looked along the
knife
Smiling, and watched the thick drops
mix and run
Down the sheer blade; not that which
had been done
Could hurt the sweet sense of the Roman
wife,
But that which was to do yet ere the
strife
Could end for each forever, and the sun:
Nor was the palm yet nor was peace yet
won
While pain had power upon her hus-
band's life.
It does not hurt, Italia. Thou art more
Than bride to bridegroom; how shalt
thou not take
The gift love's blood has reddened for
thy sake?
Was not thy lifeblood given for us be-
fore?
And if love's heartblood can avail thy
need,
And thou not die, how should it hurt
indeed?
1871.

THE OBLATION

ASK nothing more of me, sweet,
All I can give you I give.
Heart of my heart, were it more,
More would be laid at your feet:
Love that should help you to live,
Song that should spur you to soar.
All things were nothing to give
Once to have sense of you more,
Touch you and taste of you, sweet,
Think you and breathe you and live,
Swept of your wings as they soar,
Trod by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more
Give you but love of you, sweet:
He that hath more, let him give;
He that hath wings, let him soar;
Mine is the heart at your feet
Here, that must love you to live.
1871.

A FORSAKEN GARDEN

In a coign of the cliff between lowland
and highland,
At the sea-down's edge between wind-
ward and lee,
Walled round with rocks as an inland
island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.
A girdle of brushwood and thorn en-
closes
The steep square slope of the blos-
somless bed
Where the weeds that grew green from
the graves of its roses
Now lie dead.
The fields fall southward, abrupt and
broken,
To the low last edge of the long lone
land.
If a step should sound or a word be
spoken,
Would a ghost not rise at the strange
guest's hand?
So long have the gray bare walks lain
guestless,
Through branches and briars if a man
make way,
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's,
restless
Night and day.
The dense hard passage is blind and
stifed
That crawls by a track none turn to
climb
To the strait waste place that the years
have rifled
Of all but the thorns that are touched
not of time.
The thorns he spares when the rose is
taken;
The rocks are left when he wastes the
plain;
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-
shaken,
These remain.
Not a flower to be pressed of the foot that
falls not; [plots are dry;
As the heart of a dead man the seed

From the thicket of thorns whence the
 nightingale calls not,
 Could she call, there were never a rose
 to reply.

Over the meadows that blossom and
 wither,
 Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song.
 Only the sun and the rain come hither
 All year long.

The sun burns sear, and the rain dishev-
 els
 One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless
 breath.

Only the wind here hovers and revels
 In a round where life seems barren as
 death.

Here there was laughing of old, there
 was weeping,
 Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
 Whose eyes went seaward a hundred
 sleeping
 Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood,
 "Look thither,"

Did he whisper? "Look forth from
 the flowers to the sea;
 For the foam-flowers endure when the
 rose-blossoms wither,
 And men that love lightly may die—
 But we?"

And the same wind sang, and the same
 waves whitened,

And or ever the garden's last petals
 were shed,

In the lips that had whispered, the eyes
 that had lightened,
 Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and
 then went whither?

And were one to the end—but what
 end who knows?

Love deep as the sea as a rose must
 wither,

As the rose-red seaweed that mocks
 the rose.

Shall the dead take thought for the dead
 to love them?

What love was ever as deep as a grave?
 They are loveless now as the grass above
 them

Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
 Not known of the cliffs and the fields
 and the sea.

Not a breath of the time that has been
 hovers

In the air now soft with a summer to
 be.

Not a breath shall there sweeten the
 seasons hereafter

Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh
 now or weep,

When, as they that are free now of weep-
 ing and laughter,

We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again forever;
 Here change may come not till all
 change end.

From the graves they have made they
 shall rise up never.

Who have left naught living to rav-
 age and rend.

Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild
 ground growing,

When the sun and the rain live, these
 shall be;

Till a last wind's breath upon all these
 blowing

Roll the sea.

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff
 crumble,

Till terrace and meadow the deep
 gulfs drink,

Till the strength of the waves of the high
 tides humble

The fields that lessen, the rocks that
 shrink.

Here now in his triumph where all things
 falter,

Stretched out on the spoils that his
 own hand spread,

As a god self-slain on his own strange
 altar,

Death lies dead.

July, 1876.

A BALLAD OF DREAMLAND

I HID my heart in a nest of roses,
 Out of the sun's way, hidden apart;

In a softer bed than the soft white snow's
 is.

Under the roses I hid my heart.

Why would it sleep not? why should
 it start,

When never a leaf of the rose-tree stirred?
 What made sleep flutter his wings and
 part?

Only the song of a secret bird.

Lie still, I said, for the wind's wing closes,
 And mild leaves muffle the keen sun's
 dart;

Lie still, for the wind on the warm seas
dozes,
And the wind is quieter yet than
thou art.
Does a thought in thee still as a
thorn's wound smart?
Does the fang still fret thee of hope de-
ferred?
What bids the lips of thy sleep dispart?
Only the song of a secret bird.

The green land's name that a charm en-
closes,
It never was writ in the traveller's
chart,
And sweet on its trees as the fruit that
grows is,
It never was sold in the merchant's
mart.
The swallows of dreams through its
dim fields dart,
And sleep's are the tunes in its tree-tops
heard;
No hound's note wakens the wild-
wood hart,
Only the song of a secret bird.

ENVOI

In the world of dreams I have chosen
my part,
To sleep for a season and hear no word
Of true love's truth or of light love's art,
Only the song of a secret bird.
September, 1876.

A BALLAD OF FRANÇOIS VILLON,

PRINCE OF ALL BALLAD-MAKERS

BIRD of the bitter bright gray golden
morn,
Scarce risen upon the dusk of dolorous
years,
First of us all and sweetest singer born,
Whose far shrill note the world of
new men hears
Cleave the cold shuddering shade as
twilight clears;
When song new-born put off the old
world's attire
And felt its tune on her changed lips ex-
pire,
Writ foremost on the roll of them that
came
Fresh girl for service of the latter lyre,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
name!

Alas, the joy, the sorrow, and the scorn,
That clothed thy life with hopes and
sins and fears,
And gave thee stones for bread and tares
for corn
And plume-plucked gaol-birds for thy
starveling peers,
Till death clipt close their flight with
shameful shears;
Till shifts came short and loves were
hard to hire,
When lilt of song nor twitch of twang-
ling wire
Could buy thee bread or kisses; when
light fame
Spurned like a ball and haled through
brake and briar,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
name!

Poor splendid wings so frayed and soiled
and torn!
Poor kind wild eyes so dashed with
light quick tears!
Poor perfect voice, most blithe when
most forlorn,
That rings athwart the sea whence no
man steers,
Like joy-bells crossed with death-bells
in our ears!
What far delight has cooled the fierce
desire
That, like some ravenous bird, was
strong to tire
On that frail flesh and soul consumed
with flame,
But left more sweet than roses to respire,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
name?

ENVOI

Prince of sweet songs made out of tears
and fire,
A harlot was thy nurse, a God thy sire;
Shame soiled thy song, and song as-
soiled thy shame.
But from thy feet now death has washed
the mire,
Love reads out first at head of all our
quire,
Villon, our sad bad glad mad brother's
name.
September, 1877.

TO LOUIS KOSSUTH

LIGHT of our fathers' eyes, and in our
own
Star of the unsetting sunset! for thy
name.

That on the front of noon was as a flame
In the great year nigh twenty years ago
When all the heavens of Europe shook
and shone

With stormy wind and lightning, keeps
its fame

And bears its witness all day through
the same;

Not for past days and great deeds past
alone,

Kossuth, we praise thee as our Landor
praised.

But that now too we know thy voice up-
raised,

Thy voice, the trumpet of the truth of
God,

Thine hand, the thunder-bearer's, raised
to smite

As with heaven's lightning for a sword
and rod

Men's heads abased before the Muscovite.
February, 1878.

CHILD'S SONG

WHAT is gold worth, say,
Worth for work or play,
Worth to keep or pay,
Hide or throw away,
Hope about or fear?
What is love worth, pray?
Worth a tear?

Golden on the mould
Lie the dead leaves rolled
Of the wet woods old,
Yellow leaves and cold,
Woods without a dove;
Gold is worth but gold;
Love's worth love. 1878.

TRIADS

I

The word of the sun to the sky,
The word of the wind to the sea,
The word of the moon to the night,
What may it be?

The sense of the flower to the fly,
The sense of the bird to the tree,
The sense of the cloud to the light,
Who can tell me?

The song of the fields to the kye,
The song of the lime to the bee,
The song of the depth to the height.
Who knows all three?

II

The message of April to May,
That May sends on into June
And June gives out to July
For birthday boon;

The delight of the dawn in the day,
The delight of the day in the noon,
The delight of a song in a sigh
That breaks the tune;

The secret of passing away,
The cast of the change of the moon,
None knows it with ear or with eye,
But all will soon.

III

The live wave's love for the shore,
The shore's for the wave as it dies,
The love of the thunder-fire
That sears the skies—

We shall know not though life wax
hoar,
Till all life, spent into sighs,
Burn out as consumed with desire
Of death's strange eyes;

Till the secret be secret no more
In the light of one hour as it flies,
Be the hour as of suns that expire
Or suns that rise. 1878.

ON THE CLIFFS

ἡμερόφωνος ἀηδῶν (SAPPHO)

BETWEEN the moondawn and the sun-
down here
The twilight hangs half starless; half
the sea
Still quivers as for love or pain or fear
Or pleasure mightier than these all may
be.

A man's live heart might beat
Wherein a God's with mortal blood
should meet
And fill its pulse too full to bear the
strain

With fear or love or pleasure's twin-born,
pain.

Fiercely the gaunt woods to the grim
soil cling
That bears for all fair fruits
Wan wild sparse flowers of windy and
wintry spring

Between the tortive serpent-shapen roots
Wherethrough their dim growth hardly
strikes and shoots

And shows one gracious thing;

Hardly, to speak for summer one sweet word
 Of summer's self scarce heard.
 But higher the steep green sterile fields,
 thicket
 With flowerless hawthorn even to the
 upward verge
 Whence the woods gathering watch new
 cliffs emerge,
 Higher than their highest of crowns
 that sea-winds fret,
 Holds fast, for all that night or wind can
 say,
 Some pale pure color yet,
 Too dim for green and luminous for gray.
 Between the climbing inland cliffs above
 And these beneath that breast and break
 the bay,
 A barren peace too soft for hate or love
 Broods on an hour too dim for night or
 day.
 O wind, O wingless wind that walk'st
 the sea,
 Weak wind, wing-broken, wearier wind
 than we,
 Who are yet not spirit-broken, maimed
 like thee,
 Who wail not in our inward night as
 thou
 In the outer darkness now,
 What word has the old sea given thee
 for mine ear
 From thy faint lips to hear?
 For some word would she send me, know-
 ing not how.

Nay, what far other word
 Than ever of her was spoken, or of me
 Or all my winged white kinsfolk of the
 sea
 Between fresh wave and wave was ever
 heard,
 Cleaves the clear dark enwinding tree
 with tree
 Too close for stars to separate and to see
 Enmeshed in multitudinous unity?
 What voice of what strong God hath
 stormed and stirred
 The fortified rock of silence, rent apart
 Even to the core Night's all maternal
 heart?
 What voice of God grown heavenlier in
 a bird,
 Make keener of edge to smite
 Than lightning,—yea, thou knowest, O
 mother Night,
 Keen as that cry from thy strange chil-
 dren sent¹

¹ In Aeschylus' Eumenides.

Wherewith the Athenian judgment-
 shrine was rent,
 For wrath that all their wrath was vainly
 spent,
 Their wrath for wrong made right
 By justice in her own divine despite
 That bade pass forth unblamed
 The sinless matricide and unashamed?
 Yea, what new cry is this, what note
 more bright
 Than their song's wing of words was
 dark of flight,
 What word is this thou hast heard,
 Thine and not thine or theirs, O Night,
 what word
 More keen than lightning and more
 sweet than light?
 As all men's hearts grew godlike in one
 bird
 And all those hearts cried on thee, cry-
 ing with might,
 Hear us, O mother Night!

Dumb is the mouth of darkness as of
 death:
 Light, sound and life are one
 In the eyes and lips of dawn that draw
 the sun
 To hear what first child's word with
 glimmering breath
 Their weak waned weanling child the
 twilight saith;
 But night makes answer none.

God, if thou be god,—bird, if bird thou
 be,—
 Do thou then answer me.
 For but one word, what wind soever
 blow,
 Is blown up upward ever from the sea.
 In fruitless years of youth dead long
 ago [and snow
 And deep beneath their own dead leaves
 Buried, I heard with bitter heart and sere
 The same sea's word unchangeable, nor
 knew
 But that mine own life-days were
 changeless too,
 And sharp and salt with unshed tear on
 tear,
 And cold and fierce and barren; and
 my soul,
 Sickening, swam weakly with bated
 breath
 In a deep sea like death,
 And felt the wind buffet her face with
 brine
 Hard, and harsh thought on thought in
 long bleak roll

Blown by keen gusts of memory sad as
thine
Heap the weight up of pain, and break,
and leave
Strength scarce enough to grieve
In the sick heavy spirit, unmanned with
strife
Of waves that beat at the tired lips of
life.

Nay, sad may be man's memory, sad
may be
The dream he weaves him as for shadow
of thee,
But scarce one breathing-space, one
heartbeat long,
Wilt thou take shadow of sadness on thy
soul.
Not thou, being more than man or man's
desire,
Being bird and God in one,
With throat of gold and spirit of the
sun;
The sun whom all our souls and songs
call sire,
Whose godhead gave thee, chosen of all
our quire,
Thee only of all that serve, of all that
sing
Before our sire and king,
Borne up some space on time's world-
wandering wing,
This gift, this doom, to bear till time's
wing tire—
Life everlasting of eternal fire.

Thee only of all; yet can no memory say
How many a night and day
My heart has been as thy heart, and my
life
As thy life is, a sleepless hidden thing,
Full of the thirst and hunger of winter
and spring,
That seeks its food not in such love or
strife
As fill men's hearts with passionate
hours and rest.
From no loved lips and on no loving
breast
Have I sought ever for such gifts as bring
Comfort, to stay the secret soul with
sleep.
The joys, the loves, the labors, whence
men reap
Rathe fruit of hopes and fears,
I have made not mine; the best of all
my days
Have been as those fair fruitless summer
strays,

Those water-waifs that but the sea-wind
steers,
Flakes of glad foam or flowers on foot-
less ways
That take the wind in season and the
sun,
And when the wind wills is their season
done.

For all my days as all thy days from
birth
My heart as thy heart was in me as
thee,
Fire; and not all the fountains of the
sea
Have waves enough to quench it, nor on
earth
Is fuel enough to feed,
While day sows night, and night sows
day for seed.

We were not marked for sorrow, thou
nor I,
For joy nor sorrow, sister, were we made,
To take delight and grief to live and
die,
Assuaged by pleasures or by pains af-
frayed
That melt men's hearts and alter; we
retain
A memory mastering pleasure and all
pain,
A spirit within the sense of ear and eye,
A soul behind the soul, that seeks and
sings
And makes our life move only with its
wings
And feed but from its lips, that in re-
turn
Feed of our hearts wherein the old fires
that burn
Have strength not to consume
Nor glory enough to exalt us past our
doom.

*Ah, ah, the doom (thou knowest whence
rang that wail)
Of the shrill nightingale!
(From whose wild lips, thou knowest,
that wail was thrown)
For round about her have the great gods
cast
A wing-borne body, and clothed her close
and fast
With a sweet life that hath no part in
moan.
But me, for me (how hadst thou heart to
hear?) [spear.
Remains a sundering with the two-edged*

Ah, for her doom! so cried in presage
 then
 The bodeful bonds slave of the king of
 men,
 And might not win her will.
 Too close the entangling dragnet woven
 of crime,
 The snare of ill new-born of elder ill.
 The curse of new time for an elder
 time,
 Had caught and held her yet,
 Enmeshed intolerably in the intolerant
 net,
 Who thought with craft to mock the
 God most high,
 And win by wiles his crown of prophecy
 From the sun's hand sublime,
 As God were man, to spare or to forget.

But thou,—the gods have given thee and
 forgiven thee
 More than our master gave
 That strange-eyed, spirit-wounded,
 strange-tongued slave
 There questing houndlike where the
 roofs red-wet
 Reeked as a wet red grave.
 Life everlasting has their strange grace
 given thee,
 Even hers whom thou wast wont to sing
 and serve
 With eyes, but not with song, too swift
 to swerve;
 Yet might not even thine eyes estranged
 estrange her,
 Who seeing thee too, but inly, burn and
 bleed
 Like that pale princess-priest of Priam's
 seed,
 For stranger service gave thee guerdon,
 stranger
 If this indeed be guerdon, this indeed
 Her mercy, this thy meed—
 That thou, being more than all we born,
 being higher
 Than all heads crowned of him that only
 gives
 The light whereby man lives,
 The bay that bids man moved of God's
 desire
 Lay hand on lute or lyre,
 Set lip to trumpet or deflowered green
 reed—
 If this were given thee for a grace in-
 deed,
 That thou, being first of all these, thou
 alone
 Shouldst have the grace to die not, but
 to live,

And loose nor change one pulse of song,
 one tone
 Of all that were thy lady's and thine
 own,
 The lady's whom thou criest on to for-
 give,
 Thou, priest and sacrifice on the altar-
 stone
 Where none may worship not of all that
 live,
 Love's priestess, errant on dark ways
 diverse;
 If this were grace indeed for Love to
 give,
 If this indeed were blessing and no
 curse.

Love's priestess, mad with pain and joy
 of song,
 Song's priestess, mad with joy and pain
 of love,
 Name above all names that are lights
 above,
 We have lov'd, prais'd, pitied, crown'd,
 and done thee wrong,
 O thou past praise and pity; thou the
 sole
 Utterly deathless, perfect only and
 whole
 Immortal, body and soul.
 For over all whom time hath overpast
 The shadow of sleep inexorable is cast,
 The implacable sweet shadow of perfect
 sleep
 That gives not back what life gives death
 to keep;
 Yea, all that liv'd and lov'd and sang
 and sinn'd
 Are all borne down death's cold, sweet,
 soundless wind
 That blows all night and knows not
 whom its breath,
 Darkling, may touch to death:
 But one that wind hath touch'd and
 changed not,—one
 Whose body and soul are parcel of the
 sun;
 One that earth's fire could burn not, nor
 the sea
 Quench; nor might human doom take
 hold on thee;
 All praise, all pity, all dreams have done
 thee wrong,
 All love, with eyes love-blinded from
 above;
 Song's priestess, mad with joy and pain
 of love,
 Love's priestess, mad with pain and joy
 of song.

Hast thou none other answer then for
 me
 Than the air may have of thee,
 Or the earth's warm woodlands girdling
 with green girth
 Thy secret, sleepless, burning life on
 earth,
 Or even the sea that once, being woman
 crown'd
 And girt with fire and glory of anguish
 round,
 Thou wert so fain to seek to, fain to
 crave
 If she would hear thee and save
 And give thee comfort of thy great
 green grave?
 Because I have known thee always who
 thou art,
 Thou knowest, have known thee to thy
 heart's own heart,
 Nor ever have given light ear to storied
 song
 That did thy sweet name sweet unwitting
 wrong,
 Nor ever have called thee nor would call
 for shame,
 Thou knowest, but inly, by thine only
 name,
 Sappho—because I have known thee
 and loved, hast thou
 None other answer now?
 As brother and sister were we, child
 and bird,
 Since thy first Lesbian word
 Flamed on me, and I knew not whence
 I knew
 This was the song that struck my whole
 soul through,
 Pierced my keen spirit of sense with
 edge more keen,
 Even when I knew not—even ere sooth
 was seen—
 When thou wast but the tawny sweet
 winged thing
 Whose cry was but of spring.
 And yet even so thine ear should hear
 me—yea,
 Hear me this nightfall by this northland
 bay,
 Even for their sake whose loud good
 word I had,
 Singing of thee in the all-beloved clime
 Once, where the windy wine of spring
 makes mad
 Our sisters of Majano, who kept time
 Clear to my choral rhyme.
 Yet was the song acclaimed of these
 aloud

Whose praise had made mute humble-
 ness misproud,
 The song with answering song ap-
 plauded thus,
 But of that Daolian dream of Itylus.
 So but for love's love haply was it—nay,
 How else?—that even their song took
 my song's part,
 For love of love and sweetness of sweet
 heart,
 Or god-given glorious madness of mid
 May
 And heat of heart and hunger and
 thirst to sing,
 Full of the new wine of the wind of
 spring.

Or if this were not, and it be not sin
 To hold myself in spirit of thy sweet
 kin,
 In heart and spirit of song;
 If this my great love do thy grace no
 wrong,
 Thy grace that gave me grace to dwell
 therein;
 If thy gods thus be my gods, and their
 will
 Made my song part of thy song—even
 such part
 As man's hath of God's heart—
 And my life like as thy life to fulfil;
 What have our gods then given us?
 Ah, to thee
 Sister, much more, much happier than
 to me,
 Much happier things they have given,
 and more of grace
 Than falls to man's light race;
 For lighter are we, all our love and pain
 Lighter than thine, who knowest of
 time or place
 Thus much, that place nor time
 Can heal or hurt or lull or change
 again
 The singing soul that makes his soul
 sublime
 Who hears the far fall of its fire-fledged
 rhyme
 Fill darkness as with bright and burning
 rain,
 Till all the live gloom inly glows, and
 light
 Seems with the sound to cleave the core
 of night.
 The singing soul that moves thee, and
 that moved
 When thou wast woman, and their
 songs divine

Who mixed for Grecian mouths heav-
 en's lyric wine
 Fell dumb, fell down reproved
 Before one sovereign Lesbian song of
 thine.

That soul, though love and life had fain
 held fast,

Wind-winged with fiery music, rose
 and past

Through the indrawn hollow of earth
 and heaven and hell,

As through some strait sea-shell

The wide sea's immemorial song,—the
 sea

That sings and breathes in strange men's
 ears of thee

How in her barren bride bed, void and
 vast,

Even thy soul sang itself to sleep at last.

To sleep? Ah, then, what song is this,
 that here

Makes all the night one ear,
 One ear fulfilled and mad with music,
 one

Heart kindling as the heart of heaven,
 to hear

A song more fiery than the awakening
 sun

Sings, when his song sets fire
 To the air and clouds that build the
 dead night's pyre?

*O thou of divers-colored mind, O thou
 Deathless, God's daughter, subtle-souled*
 —lo, now,

Now to the song above all songs, in flight
 Higher than the day-star's height,
 And sweet as sound the moving wings
 of night!

Thou of the divers-colored seat—behold,
 Her very song of old!—

O deathless, O God's daughter, subtle-
souled!

That same cry through this boskage
 overhead

Rings round reiterated,
 Palpitates as the last palpitated,
 The last that panted through her lips
 and died

Not down this gray north sea's half
 sapped cliff-side

That crumbles toward the coastline,
 year by year

More near the sands and near:
 The last loud lyric fiery cry she cried,

Heard once on heights Leucadian,—
 heard not here.

Not here; for this that fires our north-
 land night,

This is the song that made
 Love fearful, even the heart of love
 afraid,

With the great anguish of its great de-
 light.

No swan-song, no far-fluttering half-
 drawn breath,

No word that love of love's sweet nature
 saith,

No dirge that lulls the narrowing lids of
 death,

No healing hymn of peace-prevented
 strife,—

This is her song of life.

*I loved thee,—hark, one tenderer note
 than all—*

*At this, of old time, once—one low long
 fall,*

Sighing—one low lovely loveless
 call,

Dying—one pause in song so flamelike
 fast—

At this, long since in old time overpast—
 One soft first pause and last,

One,—then the old rage of rapture's
 fieriest rain

Storms all the music-maddened night
 again.

Child of God, close craftswoman, I be-
seech thee

Bid not ache nor agony break nor mas-
ter,

Lady, my spirit—

O thou her mistress, might her cry not
 reach thee?

Our Lady of all men's loves, could Love
 go past her,

Pass, and not hear it?

She hears not as she heard not: hears
 not me,

O trebled-natured mystery—how should
 she

Hear, or give ear?—who heard and
 heard not thee;

Heard and went past, and heard not;
 but all time

Hears all that all the ravin of his years
 Hath cast not wholly out of all men's
 ears

And dulled to death with deep dense
 funeral chime

Of their reiterate rhyme.

And now of all songs uttering all her
 praise,

All hers who had thy praise and did thee
 wrong,

Abides one song yet of her lyric days,
Thine only, this thy song.

O soul triune, woman and god and
bird,
Man, man at least has heard.
All ages call thee conqueror, and thy
cry
The mightiest as the least beneath the
sky
Whose heart was ever set to song, or
stirred
With wind of mounting music blown
more high
Than wildest wing may fly,
Hath heard or hears,—even Æschylus
as I.
But when thy name was woman, and
thy word
Human,—then haply, surely then me-
seems
This thy bird's note was heard on earth
of none,
Of none save only in dreams.
In all the world then surely was but
one
Song; as in heaven at highest one
sceptred sun
Regent, on earth here surely without fail
One only, one imperious nightingale.
Dumb was the field, the woodland mute,
the lawn
Silent; the hill was tongueless as the
vale
Even when the last fair waif of cloud
that felt
Its heart beneath the coloring moonrays
melt,
At high noon of midnight half with-
drawn,
Bared all the sudden deep divine moon-
dawn.
Then, unsaluted by her twin-born tune,
That latter timeless morning of the
moon
Rose past its hour of moonrise; clouds
gave way
To the old reconquering ray,
But no song answering made it more
than day;
No cry of song by night
Shot fire into the cloud-constraining
light.
One only, one Æolian island heard
Thrill, but through no bird's throat,
In one strange manlike maiden's godlike
note,
The song of all these as a single bird;
Till the sea's portal was as funeral gate

For that sole singer in all time's ageless
date
Singled and signed for so triumphal
fate,
All nightingales but one in all the world
All her sweet life were silent; only
then,
When her life's wing of womanhood was
furled,
Their cry, this cry of thine was heard
again,
As of me now, of any born of men.

Through sleepless clear spring nights
filled full of thee,
Rekindled here, thy ruling song has
thrilled
The deep dark air and subtle tender sea
And breathless hearts with one bright
sound fulfilled.
Or at midnight to me
Swimming, and birds about my happier
head
Skimming, one smooth soft way by
water and air,
To these my bright born brethren and to
me
Hath not the clear wind borne or seemed
to bear
A song wherein all earth and heaven
and sea
Were molten in one music made of thee
To enforce us, O our sister of the shore,
Look once in heart back landward and
adore?
For songless were we sea-mews, yet had
we
More joy than all things joyful of thee—
more,
Haply, than all things happiest; nay,
save thee,
In thy strong rapture of imperious joy
Too high for heart of sea-borne bird or
boy,
What living things were happiest if not
we?
But knowing not love nor change nor
wrath nor wrong,
No more we knew of song.

Song, and the secrets of it, and their
might.
What blessings curse it and what curses
bless.
I know them since my spirit had first in
sight,
Clear as thy song's words or the live
sun's light,
The small dark body's Lesbian loveliness

That held the fire eternal ; eye and ear
 Were as a god's to see, a god's to hear,
 Through all his hours of daily and night-
 ly chime,
 The sundering of the two-edged spear of
 time ;
 The spear that pierces even the seven-
 fold shields
 Of mightiest Memory, mother of all songs
 made,
 And wastes all songs as roseleaves kissed
 and frayed
 As here the harvest of the foam-flowered
 fields ;
 But thine the spear may waste not that
 he wields
 Since first the God whose soul is man's
 live breath,
 The sun whose face hath our sun's face
 for shade,
 Put all the light of life and love and
 death
 Too strong for life, but not for love too
 strong,
 Where pain makes peace with pleasure
 in thy song,
 And in thine heart, where love and song
 make strife,
 Fire everlasting of eternal life. 1880.

ON THE DEATHS OF THOMAS CAR- LYLE AND GEORGE ELIOT

Two souls diverse out of our human sight
 Pass, followed one with love and each
 with wonder :
 The stormy sophist with his mouth of
 thunder,
 Clothed with loud words and mantled in
 the night
 Of darkness and magnificence of night ;
 And one whose eye could smite the night
 in sunder,
 Searching if light or no light were there-
 under,
 And found in love of loving-kindness
 light.
 Duty divine and Thought with eyes of
 fire
 Still following Righteousness with deep
 desire
 Shone sole and stern before her and
 above—
 Sure stars and sole to steer by ; but
 more sweet
 Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earth-
 ly feet,—
 The light of little children, and their
 love. April, 1881.

SONG FROM MARY STUART

AND ye maun braid your yellow hair,
 And busk ye like a bride ;
 Wi' sevencore men to bring ye hame,
 And ae true love beside :
 Between the birk and the green rowan
 Fu' blithely shall ye ride.

O ye maun braid my yellow hair,
 But braid it like nae bride ;
 And I maun gang my ways, mither,
 Wi' nae true love beside ;
 Between the kirk and the kirkyard
 Fu' sadly shall I ride. 1881.

HOPE AND FEAR

BENEATH the shadow of dawn's aerial
 cope,
 With eyes enkindled as the sun's own
 sphere,
 Hope from the front of youth in god-
 like cheer
 Looks Godward, past the shades where
 blind men grope
 Round the dark door that prayers nor
 dreams can ope,
 And makes for joy the very darkness
 dear
 That gives her wide wings play ; nor
 dreams that fear
 At noon may rise and pierce the heart of
 hope.
 Then, when the soul leaves off to dream
 and yearn,
 May truth first purge her eyesight to
 discern
 What once being known leaves time no
 power to appal ;
 Till youth at last, ere yet youth be not,
 learn
 The kind wise word that falls from
 years that fall—
 "Hope thou not much, and fear thou
 not at all." 1882.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Nor if men's tongues and angels' all in
 one
 Spake, might the word be said that
 might speak Thee.
 Streams, winds, woods, flowers, fields,
 mountains, yea, the sea,
 What power is in them all to praise the
 sun ?
 His praise is this,—he can be praised of
 none.

Man, woman, child, praise God for him ;
 but he
 Exults not to be worshipped, but to be.
 He is ; and, being, beholds his work well
 done.
 All joy, all glory, all sorrow, all strength,
 all mirth,
 Are his : without him, day were night
 on earth.
 Time knows not his from time's own
 period.
 All lutes, all harps, all viols, all flutes,
 all lyres,
 Fall dumb before him ere one string
 suspires.
 All stars are angels ; but the sun is God.
 1882.

CHILDREN

OF such is the kingdom of heaven.
 No glory that ever was shed
 From the crowning star of the seven
 That crown the north world's head,

No word that ever was spoken
 Of human or godlike tongue,
 Gave ever such godlike token
 Since human harps were strung.

No sign that ever was given
 To faithful or faithless eyes
 Showed ever beyond clouds riven
 So clear a Paradise.

Earth's creeds may be seventy times
 seven
 And blood have defiled each creed :
 If of such be the kingdom of heaven,
 It must be heaven indeed. 1882.

A CHILD'S LAUGHTER

All the bells of heaven may ring,
 All the birds of heaven may sing,
 All the wells on earth may spring,
 All the winds on earth may bring
 All sweet sounds together ;
 Sweeter far than all things heard,
 Hand of harper, tone of bird,
 Sound of woods at sundawn stirr'd,
 Welling water's winsome word,
 Wind in warm wan weather,

One thing yet there is, that none
 Hearing ere its chime be done
 Knows not well the sweetest one
 Heard of man beneath the sun,
 Hoped in heaven hereafter ;

Soft and strong and loud and light,
 Very sound of very light
 Heard from morning's rosiest height,
 When the soul of all delight
 Fills a child's clear laughter.

Golden bells of welcome roll'd
 Never forth such notes, nor told
 Hours so blithe in tones so bold,
 As the radiant mouth of gold
 Here that rings forth heaven.
 If the golden-crested wren
 Were a nightingale—why, then
 Something seen and heard of men
 Might be half as sweet as when
 Laughs a child of seven. 1882.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

IF childhood were not in the world,
 But only men and women grown ;
 No baby-locks in tendrils curled,
 No baby-blossoms blown ;

Though men were stronger, women
 fairer,
 And nearer all delights in reach,
 And verse and music uttered rarer
 Tones of more godlike speech ;

Though the utmost life of life's best
 hours
 Found, as it cannot now find, words ;
 Though desert sands were sweet as
 flowers
 And flowers could sing like birds,

But children never heard them, never
 They felt a child's foot leap and run :
 This were a drearier star than ever
 Yet looked upon the sun. 1882.

CHILD AND POET

You send me your love in a letter,
 I send you my love in a song :
 Ah child, your gift is the better,
 Mine does you but wrong.

No fame, were the best less brittle,
 No praise, were it wide as earth,
 Is worth so much as a little
 Child's love may be worth.

We see the children above us
 As they might angels above :
 Come back to us, child, if you love us,
 And bring us your love. 1882.

A CHILD'S FUTURE

WHAT will it please you, my darling,
hereafter to be?
Fame upon land will you look for, or
glory by sea?
Gallant your life will be always, and all
of it free.

Free as the wind when the heart of the
twilight is stirred
Eastward, and sounds from the springs
of the sunrise are heard:
Free—and we know not another as in-
finite word.

Darkness or twilight or sunlight may
compass us round,
Hate may arise up against us, or hope
may confound;
Love may forsake us; yet may not the
spirit be bound.

Free in oppression of grief as in ardor of
joy
Still may the soul be, and each to her
strength as a toy:
Free in the glance of the man as the
smile of the boy.

Freedom alone is the salt and the spirit
that gives
Life, and without her is nothing that
verily lives:
Death cannot slay her: she laughs upon
death and forgives.

Brightest and hardest of roses anear
and afar
Glitters the blithe little face of you,
round as a star:
Liberty bless you and keep you to be as
you are.

England and liberty bless you and keep
you to be
Worthy the name of their child and the
sight of their sea;
Fear not at all; for a slave, if he fears
not, is free. 1882.

ÉTUDE RÉALISTE

I

A BABY'S feet, like sea-shells pink,
Might tempt, should Heaven see meet,
An angel's lips to kiss, we think,
A baby's feet.

Like rose-hued sea-flowers toward the
heat

They stretch and spread and wink
Their ten soft buds that part and meet.

No flower-bells that expand and shrink
Gleam half so heavenly sweet
As shine on life's untrodden brink
A baby's feet.

II

A baby's hands, like rosebuds furl'd,
Whence yet no leaf expands,
Ope if you touch, though close upcurl'd
A baby's hands.

Then, even as warriors grip their brands
When battle's bolt is hurl'd,
They close, clench'd hard like tighten-
ing bands.

No rosebuds yet by dawn impearl'd
Match, even in loveliest lands,
The sweetest flowers in all the world—
A baby's hands.

III

A baby's eyes, ere speech begin,
Ere lips learn words or sighs,
Bless all things bright enough to win
A baby's eyes.

Love, while the sweet thing laughs and
lies,
And sleep flows out and in,
Lies perfect in them Paradise.

Their glance might cast out pain and sin,
Their speech make dumb the wise,
By mute glad godhead felt within
A baby's eyes. 1883

IN GUERNSEY

(TO THEODORE WATTS)

I

THE heavenly bay, ringed round with
cliffs and moors,
Storm-stained ravines, and crags that
lawns inlay,
Soothes as with love the rocks whose
guard secures
The heavenly bay.

O friend, shall time take even this away,
This blessing given of beauty that en-
dures,
This glory shown us, not to pass but stay!

Though sight be changed for memory,
 love ensures
 What memory, changed by love to sight,
 would say—
 The word that seals for ever mine and
 yours,
 The heavenly bay.

II

My mother sea, my fostress, what new
 strand,
 What new delight of waters, may this be,
 The fairest found since time's first
 breezes fanned
 My mother sea?

Once more I give me body and soul to
 thee,
 Who hast my soul for ever: cliff and
 sand
 Recede, and heart to heart once more
 are we.

My heart springs first and plunges, ere
 my hand
 Strike out from shore: more close it
 brings to me,
 More near and dear than seems my
 fatherland,
 My mother sea.

III

Across and along, as the bay's breadth
 opens, and o'er us
 Wild autumn exults in the wind, swift
 rapture and strong
 Impels us, and broader the wide waves
 brighten before us
 Across and along.

The whole world's heart is uplifted, and
 knows not wrong;
 The whole world's life is a chant to the
 sea-tide's chorus;
 Are we not as waves of the water, as
 notes of the song?

Like children unworn of the passions and
 toils that wore us,
 We breast for a season the breadth of the
 seas that throng,
 Rejoicing as they, to be borne as of old
 they bore us
 Across and along. 1883.

A SINGING LESSON

FAR-FETCHED and dear bought, as the
 proverb rehearses,

Is good, or was held so, for ladies; but
 nought
 In a song can be good if the turn of the
 verse is
 Far-fetched and dear bought.

As the turn of a wave should it sound,
 and the thought
 Ring smooth, and as light as the spray
 that disperses
 Be the gleam of the words for the garb
 thereof wrought.

Let the soul in it shine through the
 sound as it pierces
 Men's hearts with possession of music
 unsought;
 For the bounties of song are no jealous
 god's mercies,
 Far-fetched and dear bought. 1883.

THE ROUNDEL

A Roundel is wrought as a ring or a
 starbright sphere,
 With craft of delight and with cunning
 of sound unsought,
 That the heart of the hearer may smile
 if to pleasure his ear
 A roundel is wrought.

Its jewel of music is carven of all or of
 aught—
 Love, laughter, or mourning—remem-
 brance of rapture or fear—
 That fancy may fashion to hang in the
 ear of thought.

As a bird's quick song runs round, and
 the hearts in us hear—
 Pause answers to pause, and again the
 same strain caught,
 So moves the device whence, round as a
 pearl or tear,
 A roundel is wrought.

1883.

A SOLITUDE

SEA beyond sea, sand after sweep of
 sand,
 Here ivory smooth, here cloven and
 ridged with flow
 Of channelled waters soft as rain or
 snow,
 Stretch their lone length at ease beneath
 the bland
 Gray gleam of skies whose smile on
 wave and strand
 Shines weary like a man's who smiles to
 know

That now no dream can mock his faith
 with show,
 Nor cloud for him seem living sea or
 land.
 Is there an end at all of all this waste,
 These crumbling cliffs defeatured and
 defaced,
 These ruinous heights of sea-sapped
 walls that slide
 Seaward with all their banks of bleak
 blown flowers
 Glad yet of life, ere yet their hope sub-
 side
 Beneath the coil of dull dense waves
 and hours? June, 1884.

ON A COUNTRY ROAD

ALONG these low pleached lanes, on such
 a day,
 So soft a day as this, through shade and
 sun,
 With glad grave eyes that scanned the
 glad wild way
 And heart still hovering o'er a song
 begun,
 And smile that warmed the world with
 benison,
 Our father, lord long since of lordly
 rhyme,
 Long since hath haply ridden, when the
 lime
 Bloomed broad above him, flowering
 where he came.
 Because thy passage once made warm
 this clime,
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy
 name.
 Each year that England clothes herself
 with May,
 She takes thy likeness on her. Time
 hath spun
 Fresh raiment all in vain and strange
 array
 For earth and man's new spirit, fain to
 shun
 Things past for dreams of better to be
 won,
 Through many a century since thy fun-
 eral chime
 Rang, and men deemed it death's most
 direful crime
 To have spared not thee for very love or
 shame;
 And yet, while mists round last year's
 memories climb,
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy
 name.

Each turn of the old wild road whereon
 we stray,
 Meseems, might bring us face to face
 with one
 Whom seeing we could not but give
 thanks, and pray
 For England's love our father and her
 son
 To speak with us as once in days long
 done
 With all men, sage and churl and monk
 and mime,
 Who knew not as we know the soul sub-
 lime
 That sang for song's love more than
 lust of fame.
 Yet, though this be not, yet, in happy
 time,
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy
 name.
 Friend, even as bees about the flower-
 ing thyme,
 Years crowd on years, till hoar decay
 begriime
 Names once beloved; but seeing the
 sun the same,
 As birds of autumn fain to praise the
 prime,
 Our father Chaucer, here we praise thy
 name. June, 1884.

THE SEABOARD

THE sea is at ebb, and the sound of her
 utmost word
 Is soft as the least wave's lapse in a still
 small reach.
 From bay unto bay, on quest of a goal
 deferred,
 From headland ever to headland and
 breach to breach
 Where earth gives ear to the message
 that all days preach
 With changes of gladness and sadness
 that cheer and chide,
 The lone way lures me along by a chance
 untried
 That haply, if hope dissolve not and
 faith be whole,
 Not all for nought shall I seek, with a
 dream for guide,
 The goal that is not, and ever again the
 goal.
 The trackless ways are untravelled of
 sail or bird;
 The hoar wave hardly recedes from the
 soundless beach.

The silence of instant noon goes nigh to
be heard,
The viewless void to be visible : all and
each,
A closure of calm no clamor of storm
can breach
Concludes and confines and absorbs them
on either side,
All forces of light and of life and the
live world's pride.
Sands hardly ruffled of ripples that
hardly roll
Seem ever to show as in reach of a swift
brief stride [goal.
The goal that is not, and ever again the

The waves are a joy to the seamew, the
meads to the herd,
And a joy to the heart is a goal that it
may not reach.
No sense that for ever the limits of sense
engird,
No hearing or sight that is vassal to
form or speech,
Learns ever the secret that shadow and
silence teach,
Hears ever the notes that or ever they
swell subside,
Sees ever the light that lights not the
loud world's tide,
Clasps ever the cause of the lifelong
scheme's control
Wherethrough we pursue, till the waters
of life be dried, [goal.
The goal that is not, and ever again the

Friend, what have we sought or seek we,
whate'er betide,
Though the seaboard shift its mark from
afar descried,
But aims whence ever anew shall arise
the soul?
Love, thought, song, life, but show for
a glimpse and hide
The goal that is not, and ever again the
goal. 1884.

THE CLIFFSIDE PATH

SEAWARD goes the sun, and homeward
by the down
We, before the night upon his grave be
sealed.
Low behind us lies the bright steep
murmuring town,
High before us heaves the steep rough
silent field.
Breach by ghastlier breach, the cliffs
collapsing yield :

Half the path is broken, half the banks
divide ;
Flawed and crumbled, riven and rent,
they cleave and slide
Toward the ridged and wrinkled waste
of girdling sand
Deep beneath, whose furrows tell how
far and wide
Wind is lord and change is sovereign of
the strand.

Star by star on the unsunned waters
twiring down,
Golden spear-points glance against a
silver shield.
Over banks and bents, across the head-
land's crown,
As by pulse of gradual plumes through
twilight wheeled,
Soft as sleep, the waking wind awakes
the weald.
Moor and copse and fallow, near or far
descried,
Feel the mild wings move, and gladden
where they glide :
Silence uttering love that all things un-
derstand,
Bids the quiet fields forget that hard
beside
Wind is lord and change is sovereign of
the strand.

Yet may sight, ere all the hoar soft
shade grow brown,
Hardly reckon half the rifts and rents
unhealed
Where the scarred cliffs downward
sundering drive and drown,
Hewn as if with stroke of swords in
tempest steeled,
Wielded as the night's will and the
wind's may wield.
Crowned and zoned in vain with flowers
of autumn-tide,
Life and love seek harborage on the land-
ward side ;
Wind is lord and change is sovereign of
the strand.

Friend, though man be less than these,
for all his pride,
Yet, for all his weakness, shall not hope
abide ?
Wind and change can wreck but life and
waste but land :
Truth and trust are sure, though here
till all subside
Wind is lord and change is sovereign of
the strand. 1884.

IN THE WATER

THE sea is awake, and the sound of the song of the joy of her waking is rolled From afar to the star that recedes, from anear to the wastes of the wild wide shore.

Her call is a trumpet compelling us homeward: if dawn in her east be acold,

From the sea shall we crave not her grace to rekindle the life that it kindled before,

Her breath to requicken, her bosom to rock us, her kisses to bless as of yore?

For the wind, with his wings half open, at pause in the sky, neither fettered nor free,

Leans waveward and flutters the ripple to laughter: and fain would the twain of us be

Where lightly the wave yearns forward from under the curve of the deep dawn's dome,

And, full of the morning and fired with the pride of the glory thereof and the glee,

Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

Life holds not an hour that is better to live in: the past is a tale that is told, The future a sun-flecked shadow, alive and asleep, with a blessing in store.

As we give us again to the waters, the rapture of limbs that the waters enfold

Is less than the rapture of spirit whereby, though the burden it quits were sore, Our souls and the bodies they wield at their will are absorbed in the life they adore—

In the life that endures no burden, and bows not the forehead, and bends not the knee—

In the life everlasting of earth and of heaven, in the laws that atone and agree,

In the measureless music of things, in the fervor of forces that rest or that roam, That cross and return and reissue, as I after you and as you after me

Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

For, albeit he were less than the least of them, haply the heart of a man may be bold

To rejoice in the word of the sea, as a mother's that saith to the son she bore, "Child, was not the life in thee mine, and my spirit the breath in thy lips from of old?"

Have I let not thy weakness exult in my strength, and thy foolishness learn of my lore?

Have I helped not or healed not thine anguish, or made not the might of thy gladness more?"

And surely his heart should answer, "The light of the love of my life is in thee."

She is fairer than earth, and the sun is not fairer, the wind is not blither than she:

From my youth hath she shown me the joy of her bays that I crossed, of her cliffs that I clomb,

Till now that the twain of us here, in desire of the dawn and in trust of the sea,

Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and beseeches, athirst for the foam.

Friend, earth is a harbor of refuge for winter, a covert whereunder to flee

When day is the vassal of night, and the strength of the hosts of her mightier than he;

But here is the presence adored of me, here my desire is at rest and at home.

There are cliffs to be climbed upon land, there are ways to be trodden and ridden: but we

Strike out from the shore as the heart in us bids and beseeches, athirst for the foam. 1884.

THE SUNBOWS

SPRAY of song that springs in April, light of love that laughs through May.

Live and die and live for ever: nought of all things far less fair

Keeps a surer life than these that seem to pass like fire away.

In the souls they live which are but all the brighter that they were;

In the hearts that kindle, thinking what delight of old was there.

Wind that shapes and lifts and shifts them bids perpetual memory play

Over dreams and in and out of deeds and thoughts which seem to wear

Light that leaps and runs and revels through the springing flames of spray.

Dawn is wild upon the waters where we drink of dawn to-day:

Wide, from wave to wave rekindling in
rebound through radiant air,
Flash the fires unwoven and woven again
of wind that works in play,
Working wonders more than heart may
note or sight may wellnigh dare,
Wefts of rarer light than colors rain
from heaven, though this be rare.
Arch on arch unbuilt in building, reared
and ruined ray by ray,
Breaks and brightens, laughs and less-
sens, even till eyes may hardly bear
Light that leaps and runs and revels
through the springing flames of spray.

Year on year sheds light and music
rolled and flashed from bay to bay
Round the summer capes of time and
winter headlands keen and bare
Whence the soul keeps watch, and bids
her vassal memory watch and pray,
If perchance the dawn may quicken, or
perchance the midnight spare.
Silence quells not music, darkness takes
not sunlight in her snare;
Shall not joys endure that perish? Yea,
saith dawn, though night say nay:
Life on life goes out, but very life en-
kindles everywhere
Light that leaps and runs and revels
through the springing flames of spray.

Friend, were life no more than this is,
well would yet the living fare.
All aflower and all afire and all flung
heavenward, who shall say
Such a flash of life were worthless? This
is worth a world of care—
Light that leaps and runs and revels
through the springing flames of spray.
1884.

ON THE VERGE

HERE begins the sea that ends not till
the world's end. Where westand,
Could we know the next high sea-mark
set beyond these waves that gleam,
We should know what never man hath
known, nor eye of man hath scanned.
Nought beyond these coiling clouds that
melt like fume of shrines that steam
Breaks or stays the strength of waters
till they pass our bounds of dream.
Where the waste Land's End leans west-
ward, all the seas it watches roll
Find their border fixed beyond them,
and a worldwide shore's control:
These whereby we stand, no shore be-
yond us limits: these are free.

Gazing hence, we see the water that
grows iron round the Pole,
From the shore that hath no shore be-
yond it set in all the sea.

Sail on sail along the sea-line fades and
flashes: here on land
Flash and fade the wheeling wings on
wings of mews that plunge and scream.
Hour on hour along the line of life and
time's evasive strand
Shines and darkens, wanes and waxes,
slays and dies: and scarce they seem.
More than motes that thronged and
trembled in the brief noon's breath
and beam.

Some with crying and wailing, some
with notes like sound of bells that toll,
Some with sighing and laughing, some
with words that blessed and made us
whole,
Passed, and left us, and we know not
what they were, nor what were we.
Would we know, being mortal? Never
breath of answering whisper stole
From the shore that hath no shore be-
yond it set in all the sea.

Shadows, would we question darkness?
Ere our eyes and brows be fanned
Round with airs of twilight, washed
with dews from sleep's eternal stream,
Would we know sleep's guarded secret?
Ere the fire consume the brand,
Would it know if yet its ashes may re-
quickened? yet we deem
Surely man may know, or ever night
unyoke her starry team,
What the dawn shall be, or if the dawn
shall be not: yea, the scroll
Would we read of sleep's dark scripture,
pledge of peace or doom of dole.
Ah, but here man's heart leaps, yearning
toward the gloom with venturous glee,
Though his pilot eye behold nor bay nor
harbor, rock nor shoal,
From the shore that hath no shore be-
yond it set in all the sea.

Friend, who knows if death indeed have
life or life have death for goal?
Day nor night can tell us, nor may seas
declare nor skies unroll
What has been from everlasting, or if
aught shall always be.
Silence answering only strikes response
reverberate on the soul
From the shore that hath no shore
beyond it set in all the sea. 1884.

ON THE MONUMENT ERECTED
TO MAZZINI AT GENOA

ITALIA, mother of the souls of men,
Mother divine
Of all that serv'd thee best with sword
or pen,
All sons of thine,

Thou knowest that here the likeness of
the best
Before thee stands :
The head most high, the heart found
faithfullest,
The purest hands.

Above the fume and foam of time that
flits,
The soul, we know,
Now sits on high where Alighieri sits
With Angelo.

Nor his own heavenly tongue hath heav-
enly speech
Enough to say
What this man was, whose praise no
thought may reach,
No words can weigh.

Since man's first mother brought to
mortal birth
Her first-born son,
Such grace befell not ever man on earth
As crowns this One.

Of God nor man was ever this thing
said :
That he could give
Life back to her who gave him, that his
dead
Mother might live.

But this man found his mother dead and
slain,
With fast-seal'd eyes,
And bade the dead rise up and live again,
And she did rise :

And all the world was bright with her
through him :
But dark with strife,
Like heaven's own sun that storming
clouds bedim,
Was all his life.

Life and the clouds are vanish'd ; hate
and fear
Have had their span
Of time to hurt and are not : He is here,
The sunlike man.

City superb, that hadst Columbus first
For sovereign son,
Be prouder that thy breast hath later
nursed
This mightier One.

Glory be his for ever, while his land
Lives and is free,
As with controlling breath and sove-
reign hand
He bade her be.

Earth shows to heaven the names by
thousands told
That crown her fame,
But highest of all that heaven and earth
behold,
Mazzini's name. 1884.

THE INTERPRETERS

I

DAYS dawn on us that make amends for
many
Sometimes,
When heaven and earth seem sweeter
even than any
Man's rhymes.

Light had not all been quenched in
France, or quelled
In Greece,
Had Homer sung not, or had Hugo held
His peace.

Had Sappho's self not left her word thus
long
For token,
The sea round Lesbos yet in waves of
song
Had spoken.

II

And yet these days of subtler air and
finer
Delight,
When lovelier looks the darkness, and
diviner
The light—

The gift they give of all these golden
hours,
Whose urn
Pours forth reverberate rays or shadow-
ing showers
In turn—

Clouds, beams, and winds that make the
live day's track
Seem living—

What were they did no spirit give them
back
Thanksgiving?

III

Dead air, dead fire, dead shapes and
shadows, telling
Time nought;
Man gives them sense and soul by song,
and dwelling
In thought.

In human thought their being endures,
their power
Abides:
Else were their life a thing that each
light hour
Derides.

The years live, work, sigh, smile, and
die, with all
They cherish;
The soul endures, though dreams that
fed it fall
And perish.

IV

In human thought have all things habi-
tation;
Our days
Laugh, lower, and lighten past, and find
no station
That stays.

But thought and faith are mightier
things than time
Can wrong,
Made splendid once with speech, or made
sublime
By song.

Remembrance, though the tide of change
that rolls
Wax hoary,
Gives earth and heaven, for song's sake
and the soul's,
Their glory. 1885.

A WORD WITH THE WIND

LORD of days and nights that hear thy
word of wintry warning,
Wind whose feet are set on ways that
none may tread,
Change the nest wherein thy wings are
fledged for flight by morning,
Change the harbor whence at dawn
thy sails are spread.

Not the dawn, ere yet the imprisoning
night has half released her,
More desires the sun's full face of
cheer, than we,
Well as yet we love the strength of the
iron-tongued north-easter,
Yearn for wind to meet us as we front
the sea.
All thy ways are good, O wind, and all
the world should fester,
Were thy fourfold godhead quenched,
or stilled thy strife:
Yet the waves and we desire too long
the deep south-wester,
Whence the waters quicken shore-
ward, clothed with life.
Yet the field not made for ploughing
save of keels nor harrowing
Save of storm-winds lies unbrightened
by thy breath:
Banded broad with ruddy samphire
glow the sea-banks narrowing
Westward, while the sea gleams chill
and still as death.
Sharp and strange from inland sounds
thy bitter note of battle,
Blown between grim skies and waters
sullen-souled,
Till the baffled seas bear back, rocks
roar and shingles rattle,
Vexed and angered and anhungered
and acold.
Change thy note, and give the waves
their will, and all the measure,
Full and perfect, of the music of their
might,
Let it fill the bays with thunderous
notes of pleasure,
Shake the shores with passion, sound
at once and smite.
Sweet are even the mild low notes of
wind and sea, but sweeter
Sounds the song whose choral wrath
of raging rhyme
Bids the shelving shoals keep tune with
storm's imperious metre,
Bids the rocks and reefs respond in
rapturous chime.
Sweet the lisp and lulling whisper and
luxurious laughter, [the sun
Soft as love or sleep, of waves whereon
Dreams, and dreams not of the darkling
hours before nor after,
Winged with cloud whose wrath shall
bid love's day be done.
Yet shall darkness bring the awakening
sea a lordlier lover,
Clothed with strength more amorous
and more strenuous will,

Whence her heart of hearts shall kindle
 and her soul recover
 Sense of love too keen to lie for love's
 sake still.
 Let thy strong south-western music
 sound, and bid the billows
 Brighten, proud and glad to feel thy
 scourge and kiss
 Sting and soothe and sway them, bowed
 as aspens bend or willows,
 Yet resurgent still in breathless rage
 of bliss.
 All to-day the slow sleek ripples hardly
 bear up shore-ward,
 Charged with sighs more light than
 laughter, faint and fair,
 Like a woodland lake's weak wavelets
 lightly lingering forward, [air.
 Soft and listless as the slumber-stricken
 Be the sunshine bared or veiled, the sky
 superb or shrouded,
 Still the waters; lax and languid,
 chafed and foiled,
 Keen and thwarted, pale and patient,
 clothed with fire or clouded,
 Vex their heart in vain, or sleep like
 serpents coiled.
 Thee they look for, blind and baffled,
 wan with wrath and weary,
 Blown for ever back by winds that
 rock the bird:
 Winds that seamews breast subdue the
 sea, and bid the dreary
 Waves be weak as hearts made sick
 with hope deferred.
 Let thy clarion sound from westward,
 let the south bear token
 How the glories of thy godhead sound
 and shine:
 Bid the land rejoice to see the land-
 wind's broad wings broken,
 Bid the sea take comfort, bid the
 world be thine.
 Half the world abhors thee beating back
 the sea, and blackening
 Heaven with fierce and woful change
 of fluctuant form:
 All the world acclaims thee shifting sail
 again, and slackening
 Cloud by cloud the close-reefed cordage
 of the storm.
 Sweeter fields and brighter woods and
 lordlier hills than waken
 Here at sunrise never hailed the sun
 and thee:
 Turn thee then, and give them comfort,
 shed like rain and shaken
 Far as foam that laughs and leaps
 along the sea. 1889.

IN TIME OF MOURNING

"RETURN," we dare not as we fain
 Would cry from hearts that yearn:
 Love dares not bid our dead again
 Return.

O hearts that strain and burn
 As fires fast fettered burn and strain!
 Bow down, lie still, and learn.

The heart that healed all hearts of pain
 No funeral rites inurn:
 Its echoes, while the stars remain,
 Return. *May, 1885. 1889.*

A SEQUENCE OF SONNETS ON THE
 DEATH OF ROBERT BROWNING

THE clearest eyes in all the world they
 read
 With sense more keen and spirit of sight
 more true
 Than burns and thrills in sunrise, when
 the dew
 Flames, and absorbs the glory round it
 shed,
 As they the light of ages quick and dead,
 Closed now, forsake us: yet the shaft
 that slew
 Can slay not one of all the works we
 knew,
 Nor death discrown that many-laurelled
 head.
 The works of words whose life seems
 lightning wrought,
 And moulded of unconquerable thought,
 And quickened with imperishable flame,
 Stand fast and shine and smile, assured
 that nought
 May fade of all their myriad-moulded
 fame,
 Nor England's memory clasp not Brown-
 ing's name.

Death, what hast thou to do with one
 for whom
 Time is not lord, but servant? What
 least part
 Of all the fire that fed his living heart,
 Of all the light more keen than sun-
 dawn's bloom
 That lit and led his spirit, strong as doom
 And bright as hope, can aught thy
 breath may dart
 Quench? Nay, thou knowest he knew
 thee what thou art,
 A shadow born of terror's barren womb,

That brings not forth save shadows.
 What art thou,
 To dream, albeit thou breathe upon his
 brow,
 That power on him is given thee,—that
 thy breath
 Can make him less than love acclaims
 him now,
 And hears all time sound back the word
 it saith?
 What part hast thou then in his glory,
 Death?

.
 But he—to him, who knows what gift is
 thine,
 Death? Hardly may we think or hope
 when we
 Pass likewise thither where to-night is
 he,
 Beyond the irremeable outer seas that
 shine
 And darken round such dreams as half
 divine
 Some sunlit harbor in that starless sea
 Where gleams no ship to windward or
 to lee,
 To read with him the secret of thy shrine.
 There too, as here, may song, delight,
 and love,
 The nightingale, the sea-bird, and the
 dove,
 Fulfil with joy the splendor of the sky
 Till all beneath wax bright as all above :
 But none of all that search the heavens,
 and try
 The sun, may match the sovereign
 eagle's eye.

Among the wondrous ways of men and
 time
 He went as one that ever found and
 sought
 And bore in hand the lamplike spirit
 of thought
 To illumine with instance of its fire sub-
 lime
 The dusk of many a cloudlike age and
 clime.
 No spirit in shape of light and darkness
 wrought.
 No faith, no fear, no dream, no rapture,
 nought
 That blooms in wisdom, nought that
 burns in crime,
 No virtue girt and armed and helmed
 with light,
 No love more lovely than the snows are
 white.

No serpent sleeping in some dead soul's
 tomb,
 No song-bird singing from some live
 soul's height,
 But he might hear, interpret, or illumine
 With sense invasive as the dawn of
 doom.

What secret thing of splendor or of
 shade
 Surmised in all those wandering ways
 wherein
 Man, led of love and life and death and
 sin,
 Strays, climbs, or cowers, allured, ab-
 sorbed, afraid,
 Might not the strong and sunlike sense
 invade
 Of that full soul that had for aim to win
 Light, silent over time's dark toil and
 din,
 Life, at whose touch death fades as dead
 things fade?
 O spirit of man, what mystery moves in
 thee
 That he might know not of in spirit, and
 see
 The heart within the heart that seems
 to strive,
 The life within the life that seems to be,
 And hear through all thy storms that
 whirl and drive,
 The living sound of all men's souls alive?

He held no dream worth waking : so he
 said,
 He who stands now on death's tri-
 umphal steep,
 Awakened out of life wherein we sleep
 And dream of what he knows and sees,
 being dead.
 But never death for him was dark or
 dread :
 "Look forth" he bade the soul, and
 fear not. Weep,
 All ye that trust not in his truth, and
 keep
 Vain memory's vision of a vanished head
 As all that lives of all that once was he
 Save that which lightens from his word :
 but we,
 Who, seeing the sunset-colored waters
 roll,
 Yet know the sun subdued not of the
 sea,
 Nor weep nor doubt that still the spirit
 is whole,
 And life and death but shadows of the
 soul.

January, 1890.

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- My good blade carves the casques of men, T 493
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- My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains, K 408
- My heart leaps up when I behold, W 26
- My hopes retire, my wishes as before, L 443
- My letters! all dead paper, mute and white, EBB 561
- My love has talk'd with rocks and trees, T 509
- My love, this is the bitterest, that thou, RB 626
- My own Beloved, who hast lifted me, EBB 560
- My poet, thou canst touch on all the notes, EBB 558
- My sister! my sweet sister! if a name, B 210
- My soul is an enchanted boat, Sh 321
- My spirit is too weak — mortality, K 386
- Nay, but you, who do not love her, RB 605
- Nay traveller! rest. This lonely yew tree stands, W 4
- Never the time and the place, RB 681
- Nobly, nobly, Cape Saint Vincent to the Northwest died away, RB 605
- No, great Dome of Agrippa, thou art not Christian! canst not, Cl 692
- Nor happiness, nor majesty, nor fame, Sh 358
- No more — no more — Oh! never more on me, B 242
- Now Morning from her orient chamber came, K 372
- No, my own Love of other years! L 441
- Non ego hoc ferrem calida juvenia, B 242
- No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist, K 409
- Not as with sundering of the earth, Sw 869
- Not by one measure may'st thou mete our love, R 798
- Nothing so difficult as a beginning, B 253
- No! those days are gone away, K 388
- Not if men's tongues and angels' all in one, Sw 899
- Not I myself know all my love for thee, R 798
- Not that the earth is changing, O my God, R 778
- Now, sometimes in my sorrow shut, T 503
- Now fades the last long streak of snow, T 511
- Nuns fret not at their convents' narrow room, W 48
- O bitter sea, tumultuous sea, M 839
- O blithe new-comer! I have heard, W 42
- O Brignall banks are wild and fair, Sc 161
- O death that maketh life so sweet, M 840
- O diviner air, T 549
- Of Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told, R 805
- Of heaven or hell I have no power to sing, M 842
- Of late, in one of those most weary hours, C 102
- Of old sat Freedom on the heights, T 479
- O follow, follow, Sh 314
- O Friend! I know not which way I must turn, W 32
- Of such is the kingdom of heaven, Sw 900
- Of I had heard of Lucy Gray, W 18

- O Goddess! hear these tuneless numbers,
 wrung, K 406
 O good gigantic smile o' the brown old earth,
 RB 657
 Oh Galuppi, Baldassaro, this is very sad to
 find, RB 621
 O happy seafarers are ye, M 840
 O heart of hearts, the chalice of love's fire,
 Sw 888
 Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy, W 46
 Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom, B 186
 Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story.
 B 271
 Oh! there are spirits of the air, Sh 275
 Oh, to be in England, RB 605
 Oh yes! they love through all this world of
 ours, EBB 563
 Oh! young Lochinvar is come out of the
 west, Sc 141
 O June, O June, that we desired so, M 854
 "Old things need not be therefore true," Cl
 700
 O let me love my love unto myself alone, Cl 704
 O, let the solid ground, T 519
 O living will that shalt endure, T 513
 O lord of all compassionate control, R 794
 O lovers' eyes are sharp to see, Sc 113
 O lyric Love, half angel and half bird, RB
 668
 O muse that swayest the sad northern song,
 M 864
 On a battle-trumpet's blast, Sh 310
 On a poet's lips I slept, Sh 310
 Once did she hold the glorious earth in fee,
 W 31
 Once in a golden hour, T 539
 Once more the changed year's turning wheel
 returns, R 805
 Once more upon the waters! yet once more,
 B 189
 One day, it thundered and lightened, RB 680
 One flame-winged brought a white-winged
 harp-player, R 794
 On either side the river lie, T 462
 One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee, Cl
 708
 One morn before me were three figures seen,
 K 405
 One word is too often profaned, Sh 368
 One writes that "other friends remain," T
 500
 One year ago my path was green, L 441
 O mighty-mouth'd inventor of harmonies, T
 536
 On the brink of the night and the morning,
 Sh 320
 On the sea and at the Hague, sixteen hun-
 dred ninety-two, RB 669
 On the smooth brow and clustering hair, L
 443
 On the wide level of a mountain's head, C 70
 On this sweet bank your head thrice sweet
 and dear, R 795
 O only source of all our light and life, Cl 698
 O pensive, tender maid, downcast and shy,
 M 854
 O Rome! my country! city of the soul, B 236
 O set us down together in some place, M 850
 Or shall I say, vain word, false thought, Cl
 694
 O ship, ship, ship, Cl 702
 O sleep, it is a gentle thing, C 77
 O soft embalmer of the still midnight, K 423
 O solitude! if I must with thee dwell, K 372
 O sorrow, K 386
 O sorrow, cruel fellowship, T 500
 O sovereign power of love! O grief! O balm!
 K 385
 O stream descending to the sea, Cl 702
 O swallow, swallow, flying, flying south, T
 498
 O that I now, I too were, Sw 868
 O that 'twere possible, T 523
 Others abide our question. Thou art free, Ar
 708
 O thou that after toil and storm, T 504
 O thou that sendest out the man, T 542
 O thou who at Love's hour ecstatically, R
 793
 O thou! whose fancies from afar are brought,
 W 33
 O thou whose image on the shrine, Cl 699
 O thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang,
 K 382
 O thou, wild fancy, check thy wing! No
 more, C 66
 Our gaities, our luxuries, Cl 695
 Our hid vessels in their pitchy round, I.
 427
 Our spoil is won, Sh 331
 Out of my way! Off! or my sword may strike
 thee, L 452
 Overhead the tree-tops meet, RB 591
 Over the great windy waters, and over the
 clear-crested summits, Cl 691
 Over the sea our galleys went, RB 568
 O, well for him whose will is strong, T 524
 O what can all thee, knight-at-arms, K 422
 O wild west wind, thou breath of autumn's
 being, Sh 297
 O woman! in our hours of ease, Sc 156
 O world! O life! O time! Sh 358
 O ye, all ye that walk in Willowwood, R 800
 O yet we trust that somehow good, T 505
 O young mariner, T 551
 Pansies, lilies, kingcups, daisies, W 27
 Pardon, oh pardon, that my soul should
 make, EBB 563
 Past ruin'd Ilion Helen lives, L 431
 Peace, come away: the song of love, T 506
 Peace in her chamber, wheresoe'er, R 727
 Pibroch of Donuill Dhu, Sc 163
 Pleasures newly found are sweet, W 27
 Pleasure! why thus desert the heart, L 431
 Poet of Nature, thou hast wept to know, Sh
 603
 Pray but one prayer for me 'twixt thy
 closed lips, M 827
 Proud Maisie is in the wood, Sc 164
 Proud word you never spoke, but you will
 speak, L 443

- Push hard across the sand, Sw 866
Put forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane, Cl 705
- Queen Guinevere had fled the court, and sat,
T 525
Quick, painter, quick, the moment seize, Cl
703
Quoth a young Sadducee, RB 657
- Rain, rain and sun! a rainbow in the sky! T
540
Raised are the dripping oars, Ar 719
Rarely, rarely comest thou, Sh 347
Remain, ah not in youth alone, L 442
"Return" we dare not as we fain, Sw 909
Revered, beloved — O you that hold, T 513
Rhaicos was born amid the hills wherefrom,
L 446
Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky, T 510
Rivulet crossing my ground, T 521
Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean —
roll, B 239
Roman Virgil, thou that singest Ilion's lofty
temples robed in fire, T 550
Rome disappoints me still; but I shrink and
adapt myself to it, Cl 692
Rome is fallen, I hear, the gallant Medici
taken, Cl 693
Room after room, RB 630
Rough wind, that moanest loud, Sh 369
Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
RB 605
Round us the wild creatures, RB 681
Rousseau — Voltaire — our Gibbon — and De
Staël, B 214
Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione
row! T 550
- Said Abner "At last thou art come! Ere I
tell, ere thou speak, RB 611
St. Agnes' Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was!
K 398
Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate, B 258
Saith man to man, We've heard and known,
M 860
Savage, I was sitting in my house, late, lone:
RB 671
Say not the struggle nought availeth, Cl 695
Say over again and yet once over again, EBB
549
Say what blinds us, that we claim the glory,
Ar 714
Scorn not the sonnet; critic, you have frowned,
W 58
Sea beyond sea, sand after sweep of sand,
Sw 902
Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
K 409
Seaward goes the sun, and homeward by the
down, Sw 904
See, as the prettiest grave will do in time,
RB 605
See what a lovely shell, T 522
Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again, B
191
Send but a song oversea for us, Sw 886
- Set where the upper streams of Simois flow,
Ar 765
Shall I sonnet-sing you about myself? RB
672
Shame upon you, Robin, T 543
She dwelt among the untrodden ways, W 14
She fell asleep on Christmas Eve, R 774
She knew it not — most perfect pain, R 779
She loves him; for her infinite soul is love,
R 801
She should never have looked at me, RB
594
She walks in beauty, like the night, B 186
She was a Phantom of delight, W 42
Sing me a hero! Quench my thirst, RB
679
So all day long the noise of battle roll'd, T
481
"So careful of the type?" but no, T 505
So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive, W 62
So ends the winning of the Golden Fleece, M
842
So far as our story approaches the end, RB
633
So go forth to the world, to the good report
and the evil, Cl 693
So in the sinful streets, abstracted and alone,
Cl 697
So, I shall see her in just three days, RB 631
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er, Sc 159
Some future day when what is now is not,
Cl 701
Some ladies love the jewels in Love's zone,
R 794
Sometimes thou seem'st not as thyself alone,
R 797
So now my summer task is ended, Mary,
Sh 291
Soon, O Ianthe! life is o'er, L 442
So sang he: and as meeting rose and rose,
R 800
"So say the foolish!" Say the foolish so,
love, RB 683
So then, I feel not deeply! if I did, L 455
Souls of poets dead and gone, K 390
Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife, Sc
163
So we'll go no more a-roving, B 271
Spray of song that springs in April, light of
love that laughs through May, Sw 905
Spring am I, too soft of heart, M 857
Stand close around, ye Stygian set, L 437
Standing aloof in giant ignorance, K 389
Stand still, true poet that you are, RB 632
Stern daughter of the voice of God, W 44
Strahan, Tonson, Lintot of the times, B 270
Strange fits of passion have I known, W 14
Strew on her roses, roses, Ar 727
Strong son of God, immortal Love, T 499
Such, British Public, ye who like me not, RB
668
Such a starved bank of roses, RB 677
Summer is coming, summer is coming, T 553
Sunset and evening star, T 553
Surprised by joy — impatient as the wind,
W 55

Sweet and low, sweet and low, T 498
 Sweet after showers, ambrosial air, T 508
 Sweet dimness of her loosened hair's down-
 fall, R 797
 Sweet Highland girl, a very shower, W 37
 Sweet is true love, tho' given in vain, T 525
 Sweet spirit, sister of that orphan one, Sh 343
 Sweet stream-fed glen, why say "farewell"
 to thee, R 806
 Sweet twining hedge flowers wind-stirred in
 no wise, R 795
 Swiftly walk o'er the western wave, Sh 357
 Take these flowers, which purple waving, Sc
 108
 Tanagra! think not I forget, L 436
 Tax not the royal saint with vain expense,
 W 57
 Tears, idle tears, I know not what they
 mean, T 497
 Tears of the widower, when he sees, T 501
 Tell me, thou star, whose wings of light, Sh
 348
 That second time they hunted me, RB 606
 That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
 RB 595
 That son of Italy who tried to blow, Ar 761
 That which we dare invoke to bless, T 512
 The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the
 fold, B 187
 The awful shadow of some unseen Power, Sh
 287
 The Baron of Smaylho'me rose with day, Sc
 108
 The bee with his comb, RB 591
 The blessed damozel leaned out, R 774
 The castled crag of Drachenfels, B 196
 The chrysolites and rubies Bacchus brings,
 L 455
 The churl in spirit, up or down, T 511
 The clearest eyes in all the world they read,
 Sw 909
 The cock is crowing, W 26
 The Danube to the Severn gave, T 502
 The day is dark and the night, R 803
 The day returns, my natal day, L 443
 The evening comes, the fields are still, Ar 764
 The everlasting universe of things, Sh 288
 The face of all the world is changed, I think,
 EBB 55
 The fancy I had today, RB 671
 The first time that the sun rose on thine
 oath, EBB 562
 The flower that smiles today, Sh 358
 The fountains mingle with the river, Sh 299
 The frost performs its secret ministry, C 90
 The gallant youth, who may have gained, W
 59
 The gods held talk together, group'd in knots,
 Ar 745
 The gray sea, and the long black land, RB
 605
 The heavenly bay, ringed round with cliffs
 and moors, Sw 901
 The hour which might have been yet
 might not be, R 800

The human spirits saw I on a day, Cl 690
 The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece, B 249
 The joy, the triumph, the delight, the mad-
 ness, Sh 334
 The lamp must be replenish'd, but even then,
 B 214
 The lost days of my life until today, R 806
 The moth's kiss first, RB 596
 The moon is up, and yet it is not night, B 235
 The Niobe of nations, there she stands, B 236
 The odor from the flower is gone, Sh 293
 The out-spread world to span, Ar 715
 The pale stars are gone, Sh 329
 The path thro' which that lovely twain, Sh
 315
 The poet in a golden clime was born, T 461
 The poetry of earth is never dead, K 374
 The poets pour us wine, RB 674
 The rain had fallen, the Poet arose, T 497
 The rain set early in tonight, RB 569
 There be none of Beauty's daughters, B 189
 There came an image in life's retinue, R 799
 There is a flower I wish to wear, L 457
 There is a yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale, W
 36
 There is delight in singing, tho' none hear,
 L 443
 "There is no God" the wicked saith, Cl 694
 There is sweet music here that softer falls,
 T 472
 There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier, T 464
 There rolls the deep where grew the tree, T
 512
 There! said a stripling, pointing with meet
 pride, W 61
 There's a palace in Florence the world knows
 well, RB 637
 There's a woman like a dewdrop, she's so
 purer than the purest, RB 602
 There's not a joy the world can give like that
 it takes away, B 187
 There's not a nook within this solemn pass,
 W 60
 There the voluptuous nightingales, Sh 315
 There they are, my fifty men and women, RB
 654
 There was a boy; ye knew him well, ye cliffs,
 W 13
 There was a lady lived in a hall, M 838
 There was a roaring in the wind all night, W
 28
 There was a sound of revelry by night, B 192
 There was a time when meadow, grove and
 stream, W 39
 There are the symbols, on that cloth of red,
 R 779
 There were four of us about that bed, M 833
 The sails flapped loose, the wind was still, R
 788
 The sea gives her shells to the shingle, Sw 879
 The sea is at ebb, and the sound of her utmost
 word, Sw 903
 The sea is awake, and the sound of the song
 of the joy of her waking is rolled, Sw 905
 The sea is calm tonight, Ar 763
 These little firs today are things, R 777

- The skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow, Cl 702
 The sky is changed! and such a change! of night, B 202
 The sky is overcast, W 5
 The soul's Rialto hath its merchandise, EBB 559
 The spirit of the world, Ar 768
 The splendor falls on castle walls, T 498
 The stars are forth, the moon above the tops, B 231
 The sun is warm, the sky is clear, Sh 296
 The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains, T 540
 The sun upon the Weirclaw Hill, Sc 164
 The time draws near the birth of Christ, T 510
 The tongue of England, that which myriads, L 454
 The unremitting voice of nightly streams, W 63
 The violet in the green-wood bower, Sc 108
 The voice and the Peak, T 542
 The voice of the spirits of air and of earth, Sh 330
 The weltering London ways where children weep, R 812
 The wish, that of the living whole, T 605
 The word of the sun to the sky, Sw 892
 The world is a bundle of hay, B 271
 The world is too much with us; late and soon, W 50
 The world's great age begins anew, Sh 367
 The woods decay, the leaves decay and fall, T 535
 The year's at the spring, RB 576
 The year's twelve daughters had in turn gone by, L 450
 They rose to where their sovran eagle sails, T 543
 They say that hope is happiness, B 212
 Thick rise the spear-shafts o'er the land, M 862
 Thin are the night-skirts left behind, R 809
 Think thou and act; tomorrow thou shalt die, R 803
 This feast-day of the sun, his altar there, R 803
 This is a spray the Bird clung to, RB 629
 This is her picture as she was, R 776
 This is that blessed Mary, pre-elect, R 778
 This is the place. Even here the dauntless soul, R 811
 This river does not see the naked sky, K 383
 This truth came borne with bier and pall, T 507
 This world is very odd we see, Cl 695
 Thou art folded, thou art lying, Sh 336
 Thou art speeding round the sun, Sh 336
 Thou comest! all is said without a word, EBB 561
 Thou earth, calm empire of a happy soul, Sh 337
 Though God, as one that is an householder, R 804
 Though the day of my destiny's over B 209
 Thou goest, then, and leavest me behind, L 454
 Thou hast thy calling to some palace-floor, EBB 555
 Thou lovely and beloved, thou my love, R 797
 Thou shalt have one God only; who, Cl 694
 Thou shalt unravish'd bride of quietness, K 407
 Those who have laid the harp aside, L 438
 Three years she grew in sun and shower, W 15
 Thrice three hundred thousand years, Sh 300
 Through Alpine meadows soft-suffused, Ar 754
 Through the black, rushing smoke-bursts, Ar 719
 Through the great sinful streets of Naples as I passed, Cl 696
 Through thick Arcadian woods a hunter went, M 843
 Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums, T 498
 Thy voice is on the rolling air, T 513
 Tibur is beautiful too, and the orchard slopes, and the Arno, Cl 692
 'Tis death! and peace indeed is here, Ar 761
 'Tis done — but yesterday a King! B 184
 'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise, T 511
 'Tis the middle of the night by the castle clock, C 82
 'Tis time this heart should be unmoved, B 272
 'Tis well; 'tis something, we may stand, T 502
 Tibur! to whose immortal eyes, B 213
 To be a sweetness more desired than spring, R 801
 Today death seems to me an infant child, R 807
 To my ninth decade I have tottered on, L 458
 To one who has been long in city pent, K 373
 To spend uncounted years of pain, Cl 704
 To the deep, to the deep, Sh 317
 To the Lords of Convention, 'twas Claver'se who spoke, Sc 165
 Touch him ne'er so lightly, into song he broke, RB 680
 Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men, W 32
 To wear out heart and nerves and brain, Cl 705
 Tranquility! thou better name, C 94
 True-love, an thou be true, Sc 164
 Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel, and lower the proud, T 524
 'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead Ar 761
 'Twas evening, though not sunset, and the tide, L 427
 'Twas twilight and the sunless day went down, B 243
 Twenty years hence my eyes may grow, I 442
 Twist ye, twine ye, even so, Sc 162
 'Twixt the sunlight and the shade, M 827

'Twixt those twin worlds,—the world of
 sleep, which gave, R 812
 Two separate divided silences, R 799
 Two souls diverse out of our human sight,
 Sw 899
 Two voices are there; one is of the sea, W 50
 Unfathomable sea: whose waves are years,
 Sh 357
 Unlike are we, unlike, O princely heart, EBB
 555
 Under the arch of Life, where love and
 death, R 804
 Upon an eve I sat me down and wept, M 857
 Upon a Sabbath-day it fell, K 404
 Up, up, my friend, and quit your books, W
 9
 Up with me! up with me into the clouds!
 W 45
 Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity, RB 609
 Various the roads of life; in one, L 443
 Verse, a breeze mid blossoms straying, C 101
 Verse-making was least of my virtues: I
 viewed with despair, RB 681
 Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over
 land and sea, T 548
 Waken, lords and ladies gay, Sc 113
 Wanting is — what? RB 680
 Warned by her hand and shadowed by her
 hair, R 795
 Warriors and chiefs! should the shaft or the
 sword, B 187
 Wasted, weary, wherefore stay, Sc 162
 Was that the landmark? What — the foolish
 well, R 802
 Watch thou and fear; tomorrow thou shalt
 die, R 803
 Water, for anguish of the solstice: nay, R
 779
 We are in love's land today, Sw 878
 We are what suns and winds and waters
 make us, L 429
 Wearily, drearily, M 839
 Weary of myself, and sick of asking, Ar 721
 We cannot kindle when we will, Ar 721
 We come from the mind, Sh 330
 We have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair;
 thou art goodly, O Love, Sw 868
 Welcome, old friend! These many years, L
 455
 We leave the well-beloved place, T 510
 We left behind the painted buoy, T 537
 Well! if the hard was weather-wise, who
 made, C 94
 Well I remember how you smiled, L 458
 Well, they are gone, and here must I remain,
 C 70
 We mind not how the sun in the mid-sky, L
 437
 Were you with me, or I with you, Cl 702
 We rode together, M 824
 We talked with open heart, and tongue W
 17
 We were apart, yet day by day, Ar 756

We walked along, while bright and red, W 17
 We were two daughters of one race, T 467
 What a pretty tale you told me, RB 678
 What can I give thee back, O liberal, EBB
 556
 What dawn-pulse at the heart of heaven, or
 last, R 796
 Whate'er you dream, with doubt possesst,
 Cl 705
 Whatever I have said or sung, T 512
 What is gold worth, say, Sw 892
 What is it to grow old? Ar 763
 What is more gentle than a wind in summer?
 K 374
 What is the buzzing in my ears? RB 666
 What of her glass without her? The blank
 gray, R 800
 What place so strange, — though unre-
 vealed snow, R 805
 What secret thing of splendor or of shade,
 Sw 910
 What sight so lured him thro' the fields he
 knew, T 553
 What thing unto mine ear, R 789
 What voice did on my spirit fall? Cl 693
 What we, when face to face we see, Cl 699
 What will it please you, my darling, here-
 after to be? Sw 901
 What, you are stepping westward, W 38
 Wheer'asta bean saw long and mea liggin'
 ere aloan? T 538
 When a man hath no freedom to fight for at
 home, B 271
 When do I see thee most, beloved one?
 R 794
 When first, descending from the moorlands
 W 61
 When Helen first saw wrinkles in her face,
 L 430
 When I have borne in memory what has
 tamed, W 33
 When I have fears that I may cease to be,
 K 381
 When Israel of the Lord beloved, Sc 164
 When Lazarus left his charnel-cave, T 504
 When on my bed the moonlight falls, T 506
 When our two souls stand up erect and
 strong, EBB 559
 When princely Hamilton's abode, Sc 111
 When the buds began to burst, L 457
 When the enemy is near thee, Cl 695
 When the hounds of spring are on winter's
 traces, Sw 866
 When the lamp is shattered, Sh 369
 When we met first and loved, I did not build
 EBB 562
 When vain desire at last and vain regret, R
 808
 When we two parted, B 171
 Where are the great whom thou would'st
 wish to praise thee? Cl 695
 Where art thou, beloved Tomorrow, Sh 368
 Where art thou gone, light-ankled youth?
 L 454
 Where art thou, my beloved son, W 43
 Where Claribel low-lieth, T 461

Where lies the land to which the ship would
go, Cl 701
Where shall the lover rest, Sc 126
Where the quiet-colored end of evening smiles,
RB 618
Whiles in the early winter eve, M 861
Who is the happy warrior? who is he, W 47
Who is your lady of love, O ye that pass, Sw
884
Who kill'd John Keats, B 271
Who loves not Knowledge? Who shall rail,
T 511
Who prop, thou ask st, in these hard days,
my mind? Ar 708
Who shall contend with his lords, Sw 871
Who, who from Dian's feast would be away?
K 387
Who will away to Athens with me? who, L
444
"Why?" Because all I haply can and do, RB
682
Why did you melt your waxen man, R 780
"Why from the world" Ferishtah smiled,
"should thanks," RB 682
Why sit'st thou by that ruin'd hall, Sc 163
Why weep ye by the tide, ladie, Sc 162
Why, why repine, my pensive friend, L 440
Why, William, on that old gray stone, W 8
Why wilt thou cast the roses from thy hair?
R 785
Wild bird, whose warble, liquid sweet, T 509
Will sprawl, now that the heat of day is
best, RB 661
Wisdom and spirit of the universe, W 12
Wish no word unspoken, want no look away;
RB 681
With Farmer Allan at the farm abode, T 484
With little here to do or see, W 35
With rosy hand a little girl pressed down,
L 442

With sacrifice before the rising morn, W 51
With Shakespeare's manhood at a boy's
wild heart R 811
With the same heart, I said, I'll answer thee,
EBB 562
With trembling fingers did we weave, T 503
Witless alike of will and way divine, RB 668
Woe, he went galloping into the war, RB 682
Worlds on worlds are rolling ever, Sh 366
Would a man 'scape the rod? RB 657
Would that the structure brave, the mani-
fold music I build, RB 657
Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin, T 495
Years, many parti-colored years, L 455
Ye clouds! that far above me float and pause
C 88
Yes, call me by my pet-name! let me hear,
EBB 562
Yes! in the sea of life enisled, Ar 757
Yes, it was the mountain echo, W 48
Yes; I write verses now and then, L 441
Yet love, mere love, is beautiful indeed, EBB
557
Ye who have passed Death's haggard hills,
and ye, R 806
You ask me why, tho' ill at ease, T 479
You know, we French stormed Ratisbon, RB
594
You'll love me yet! and I can tarry, RB 588
Your ghost will walk, you lover of trees, RB
626
Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass,
R 796
You say, but with no touch of scorn, T 509
You send me your love in a letter, Sw 900
You smiled, you spoke, and I believed, L
442
Youth! thou wear'st to manhood now, Se
165

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